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**Space and the elaboration of occupational identity: an  
empirical case study of the UK teaching profession.**

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**Doctor of Philosophy**

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## **Abstract**

Situated understandings of identity have gained prominence in the organisational studies literature. Through the guiding works of Lefebvre and Ibarra this thesis explores the relationship between organisational space and occupational identity through an empirical study of two schools in the UK. Narratives are collected using visual prompts to examine individuals' lived experiences in the workplace. My rich data allow me to bring to the fore and unpack how physical changes form and transform occupational sense of self. In particular, my findings indicate that space is involved in the formation of occupational identity in different ways, namely, by giving a sense of continuity to employees, assisting in the development of a sense of belonging and upholding in-group identity, providing employees with a sense of expectations and idealised performances, and sustaining hierarchy by establishing a daily routine that excludes and isolates groups of workers.

This study makes three main contributions. First, through Lefebvre's lens, it discusses how identity is mediated through space and discusses the politicisation of space and shows that space can be used to emphasise or interrupt power relations in the workplace. Secondly, through application of Lefebvre's work this study explains tensions created through spatial change and the implications that these have for the formation of occupational identity. Thirdly, this study takes Lefebvre's concern with tensions one step further by unpacking the complications posed by these for the formation, reflection and modification of occupational identity. To make sense of this, Ibarra's work has been introduced to argue that space is instrumental in reflecting and formulating new, sometimes provisional, sometimes conflicting, occupational identities and this leads to ambivalence and ambiguity in the profession.

This study highlights the importance of not treating space simply in terms of walls and physical appearance. Space has a special meaning for employees and is a tool that allows them to express their sense of professional self by desiring, imagining and planning a physical space that corresponds to their professional role. When space is taken away from professionals, they create their own physical boundaries that send messages to outsiders that they have control of their profession. They do this in order to protect their professional autonomy, feel noticed at the workplace and to imprint parts of their personality according to their professional needs.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

My initial interest in exploring the relationship between organisational space and formation of occupational identity started when I began my Masters course. In a sociology module we were introduced to Lefebvre's (1991) theory and the way it was applied by organisation studies scholars by exploring the relationship between organisational space and identity.

### **1.1 Initial motivations and research questions**

I extended this interest by pursuing this topic for my Masters dissertation where I explored this relationship at a Sixth Form College. At that time, the college in question was going through a major transition: they were going to move to a new building. Their existing building was adapted in a way that it represented the way that the new building was going to be structured. For instance, there was an introduction of 'hot-desking' or 'open shared spaces' as the principal referred to it. In this study I discovered that teachers gave different narratives to this change and it appeared that it made teachers think of their sense of self and their professionalism. This transition was influenced by the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme which was introduced by the Labour government in 1997 with the aim to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century educational environment as will be elaborated in greater depth later on. It appeared this change caused a sense of anxiety, and teachers felt uncertain in the way that this change would affect them and their professionalism, and there was a sense that space was used as a political tool and that organisational power dynamics were represented through utilisation of space.

Reading around the subject I came across an inspiring review paper written by Taylor and Spicer (2007) which gave an overview of how organisational space is studied in organisation studies. I discovered that in organisation studies there were three streams of literature, namely, space as distance, space as physical appearance and space as a narrative perspective. These were approaches adapted from Lefebvre's thinking. I became interested in exploring individuals' narratives and their personal experiences with regards to the change through Lefebvre's thinking on space, and the way that space formed and re-formed their professionalism. The idea that professional identities are subject to change and (re)formation made me want to explore the ambivalence/ambiguity of teachers' narratives by using Ibarra's work on formation of identity as a guiding framework. I decided to explore teachers' profession because I found the transition in this profession fascinating and was interested in exploring what they say about it and how they react when such changes are imposed in their daily practices. I am interested in identity transition and in exploring the transition that has happened at schools in the last few years.

Teachers' professional roles and professional image have long been the focus of media and political interest, debate in the teaching profession and analytical research. Teachers have been a focus of investigation and research for many years in regard to their impact on results or practices suggesting that they are subject to institutional and organisational power dynamics. The Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme further suggests that space is being used as a political tool in enforcing change. However, there has been limited research in the field of organisation studies concerning the way in which teachers, as professionals, form and uphold their own personal and occupational identities in the face of this change.

Since organisational change brings about uncertainty, a research study exploring the ambivalence and ambiguity of participants towards change would lead to thought-provoking insights in understanding professional identity. Nor has there been any research in organisation studies that specifically brings together the two streams of literature exploring the relationship between organisational space and the formation of teachers' occupational identity. This study, influenced by Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space and Ibarra's work on formation of work identity, explores these important gaps in the organisation studies literature concerning organisational space, occupational identity, and relationships between the two.

The question is whether, if at all, physical changes in organisational space form and re-form teachers' occupational identity. Exploring this issue provides an opportunity to examine the extent to which the new organisational space forms teachers' personal perceptions of their occupational identity, the way that space is used as a political tool by comparing power dynamics, and the effect these may have on the formation of their present and future professional identities. It is useful as well to reflect on participants' responses towards change and the way that they expressed themselves through ambivalence/ambiguity. Such insights may provide foundations for a range of professional policy issues.

## **1.2 The Building Schools for the Future programme**

In this thesis, emphasis is given to the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, which was one of the largest government investments in school transformation in the UK for more than 50 years. The introduction of the BSF programme has resulted in a new organisational transformation in the teaching

profession whereby the government aimed to build 21<sup>st</sup> century buildings to meet today's teaching profession demand. This programme was initially discussed and developed by the Labour government in 1997 and was launched in 2003. It aimed to drive transformation in education, teaching and learning, to deliver educational buildings that would stimulate new approaches to learning, and create excellent facilities that would benefit teachers, students and the community. BSF aimed to rebuild or refurbish every secondary school in England by 2020, with public investment of over £55 billion (Education and Skills Committee, 2007). The rationale for this initiative was that older schools were deemed to be incapable of dealing with foreseen changes, such as shifting pedagogy, curriculum and learning expectations (Audit Commission, 2003).

Since its launch in 2003, this programme had been heavily criticised in the media and was a topic of hot political debate. Therefore, when a new Conservative government came into office in 2010, members of parliament argued that the BSF programme needed changing. They argued that reasonable planning and thorough consultation were required to ensure that things were done in the right order. In June 2010, 178 schools had been built and a further 231 were nearing completion, with plans to build a further 1,100 schools. The Conservative government later scrapped the scheme, leaving around 150 school projects in limbo pending a verdict on whether or not they would proceed. In the end, only around 75 schools were told that their project would go ahead. This scheme has now been closed, leaving a number of schools without new buildings.

So, what is the relevance of the BSF programme to this study? The questions which I explore in this study are why this programme was introduced in the first place, why

the new government decided that it was ineffective and needed to be scrapped completely and, more importantly for the purposes of this thesis, how this large financial investment has affected teachers' occupational identity. Government and policy makers considered the impact of space on teachers' and students' morale and sense of self as sufficiently significant to warrant the investment of over £55 billion, suggesting that space is used as a political tool in policy-making.

There have been mixed views as to how this programme has benefited teachers, students and communities: some claim that the transformation of buildings shapes our sense of self and continuity, while others believe that this transformation has not affected the quality of education in the UK. Despite such major investment in and transformation of the education sector, there has been no organisation studies research to date exploring how the BSF programme formed and transformed teachers' occupational identity. With this in mind the main focus has been placed on the way that power and social relations are shaped as a result of the new organisational space(s); the way that spatial constructions are shaped in connection with these power and social relations; and the way that hypothetical developments have evolved to support the links concerning social relations and spatial constructions.

### **1.3 The relationship between space, identity and change**

Defining identity can be challenging. Rather than developing a new theory of identity, the focus here is on how space influences and modifies occupational identity in relation to places of work in response to the dynamics of transformational spatial change. Also, the phrase 'organisational space' is used to refer to physical



building(s), architecture and spatial structures, paying particular attention to interactions, physical appearance, inter-subjectivity, movement and how teachers interpret space.

This thesis provides an empirical contribution to the investigation of the relationship between space, identity and change. In this study I generate data that provides insight for understanding Lefebvre's work into the way that space contributes to the social relations (power dynamics) between teachers and managers, teachers and students, and between colleagues. The interaction between the physical work space and teachers' sense of their identity and their relations with one another are unpacked in rich detail.

As such, this thesis is concerned with the interplay between space and the form of a new building, providing some insight into how organisational space contributes to the formation of the teacher's perception of self. In this way, this study shows the ways in which individuals' inter-subjectivity plays an important role in their own comprehension of the nature of the relationship between organisation and individual subjectivity. The architectural design, daily activities and interactions with their colleagues and their management team are key driving forces in shaping their subjectivities and uncertainties about their professional role. This study shows that individuals' subjectivities are complex, multifaceted and temporary which results in ambivalent and ambiguous perceptions concerning change in their professional role.

In this study we argue that individuals reflect back on their personal experiences of the workplace in understanding and reflecting on the nature of organisational change (in this instance being organisational space) and the reality of organisational power.

It is suggested that individuals recognise the importance of organisational space in forming and re-forming their occupational identity once they realise that that space is being taken away from them and when it threatens their occupational identity. When the design of the organisational space threatens their professionalism, they protect it by creating physical boundaries, such as by placing their personal belongings at their given space. This study shows that for professionals individual space is crucial in delivering a message about territorial boundaries to outsiders. More importantly, this study shows how space and identity intertwine.

By drawing on empirical data in the education sector this study shows the ways that a school's physical design, its symbolism and day-to-day practices are fundamental places through which teacher's work practices and their work identities are mediated and segregated. Through the analysis of the change in the organisational space this study explores the ways that space represents the government's and head teachers' debates of change and the way that they are symbolised in practice at schools and in their daily practices. In this way this study highlights the importance of recognising individuals' occupational identity as being multifaceted, temporary and, in particular, that it is formed through conceptualisation of space. As such, Lefebvre's (1991) and Ibarra's (1999) work is used as a guiding framework because it enables us to make sense of the way that individuals relate to change in either enhancing or resisting the discourse construction of their professional subjectivities.

As mentioned above, this study uses Henri Lefebvre's (1991) work as a guide in drawing on theoretical tools to illustrate how organisational space arrangements form and re-form teachers' occupational identity. Lefebvre was the first to show that the dynamic space itself may create crisis and uncertainty. Zhang (2006) claims that

Lefebvre has played an important role in organisation studies, shaping present-day understanding. 'The Production of Space' (1991) is his '*magnum opus*' and has attracted organisational researchers with its essential theoretical premise that space should be viewed as the location of interactions that occur in the course of 'social relations' rather than simply the end result of such relations. Accordingly, his spatial representation of 'perceived', 'conceived' and 'lived' space (Lefebvre, 1991, pp.38–9), put forward as a critical instrument for conceptual progression, has provided a vital foundation for recent debates on organisational space (see, for example, Hernes, 2004; Dobers and Strannegard, 2004; Spicer and Taylor, 2004; Dale, 2005). Thus, through his work we make sense of how space is used as a political tool and to understand the power dynamics that are used between managers and teachers alike.

As the second pillar, Ibarra's (1999) ideas around formation of occupational identity have informed this study. Ibarra argues that professional identity is constructed over time, with diverse experiences and significant responses that enable individuals to understand their vital and continuing preferences, abilities and morals. Hence, professional identity is more flexible and variable. From Ibarra's research we learn that 'provisional selves' are helpful in adapting to new roles. Her argument is that individuals portray personalities as potential personalities they would like others to assign to them. Thus, her work is fruitful in making sense of Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space and enables us to explain how space is mediated in identity.

To conclude, Lefebvre's work assists us in making sense of how space can be examined in organisation studies, incorporating the experimental and social approach to studying changes in organisational space in the teaching profession. Space is

defined as contradictory in itself. Consequently, Lefebvre's work allows a conception of space in terms of identity going into crisis when environmental space is in conflict. Through Ibarra's work we are able to note the temporary, provisional and situational nature of identity which helps us to explore whether provisional spaces are temporary solutions to meeting expectations that come with new roles. As a result, Lefebvre's and Ibarra's ideas support the examination of space and identity from a narrative point of view.

#### **1.4 The existing landscape: organisation studies and space**

The study of the spatial surroundings of the workplace has been established in organisational and management studies (Dale and Burrell, 2008; van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010; Fahy *et al.*, 2013). According to Daskalaki *et al.* (2008), this tradition can be traced back to research by Steele (1973), and even further to Mayo (1933), whose study concentrated on how workers' productivity might be influenced by the physical environment in terms of 'illumination levels within a factory environment' (Daskalaki *et al.*, 2008, p.46). For example, research by Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939) shows that physical co-location of workers, as well as '*soothing colour palettes and indoor plants*' (Sundstrom and Sundstrom, 1986, p 187), are vital as it allows 'casual groups' to develop and thrive.

Such arguments demonstrate the influence of the physical environment, including '*spatial structures and aesthetics*', on employees' efficiency. Interestingly, Homans (1950) connects 'physical' and 'social' characteristics, arguing that the 'social effect' established by Mayo in the Hawthorne experiment was due to significant alterations in the 'physical environment' (Daskalaki *et al.*, 2008, p.49). Sommer (1983)

concludes that, under pressure from civil rights movements and the birth of social design in the 1960s, sociologists have attempted to identify connections between people and their settings, in support of designers and architects. This indicates that '*physical space and the objects that symbolise it*' have momentous significance (Daskalaki *et al.*, 2008, p.49).

The central focus of scholars of organisational space, as highlighted by Yanow (1998) and Baldry (1999) however, has been traditionally on the physical design of buildings and they have not looked beyond the meanings of their design (Zhang *et al.*, 2008, p.6). This perception is underlined by Baldry *et al.* (1998), who highlight that academic studies of organisational space have centred around 'rationalisation' and its persuasive effects on members of staff, implying the use of space as a political tool, altering and exhibiting power dynamics in the workplace, in addition to progress in organisational and office design. For this reason, authors such as Baldry (1999), Kersten and Gilardi (2003), Kornberger and Clegg (2004) contend that organisation space is an immature field of study, maintaining that matters of space and architecture have remained an 'abandoned phenomenon in organisation studies' (Spicer and Taylor, 2006, p.2).

Equally, Hancock and Spicer (2011) emphasise that, despite extensive exploration in the discipline of architecture, the varied application of 'organisational space' and the significance it might have for understanding organisations continues to be under-researched. In particular, as signposted earlier, very few studies have examined how people view and give meaning to their day-to-day space. This study, through Lefebvre's (1991) work particularly focuses on the inter-subjectivity of space and aims to explore how individuals make sense of a change.

## 1.5 Identity and space in organisation studies

Identity is an important topic because policies are underpinned by some sort of theory about the link between identity and space and here I am exploring them. In this study we have a situation where teachers are faced with a radical change in their teaching practices. In this study, as highlighted above, the guiding theoretical framework in making sense of identity is that of Ibarra's (1999) work on formation of occupational identity. As such analysis here aims to establish the need for a narrative perspective on identity by utilising Ibarra's (1999) concept to help us understand the formation of occupational identity.

The post-education sector has had a policy that aimed at transforming the physical buildings and the teaching approach. The government believe that teaching should meet the 21<sup>st</sup> century demand which included the introduction of independent learning, use of technology and the introduction of hot-desking. Because of such important reasons it is essential to explore how they link with the formation of occupational identity. Dutton *et al.* (2010) and Ashcraft (2013) argue that the concept of identity has become increasingly widespread in organisation studies. This is because 'modern management' has been revealed to be concerned with handling workers' identity rather than directly with actions (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002). Other elements have debatably encouraged this growth of identity exploration in organisation studies. For instance, Giddens (1991) and Beck (1992) adopt the perspectives of 'modernity' and the ensuing rise in 'individuality and reflexivity' to conceptualise identity. Kreiner *et al.* (2006) state that most research on identity formation in work surroundings has concentrated on dominant, actual and current identities (Bartel and Dutton, 2001; Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010).

The organisation studies literature on identity encompasses three key traditions: social identity theory, discourse identity and narrative identity. This study takes a narrative identity approach and aims to give voice to teachers' personal experiences. It explores the ways in which narrative identity intervenes between manifold and conflicting personal and occupational identities at work to shape possible interpretations of self. Through Ibarra's (1999, p 782) work we understand that occupational identity is shaped over time and is centred on a wide range of experiences and significant feedback that enable individuals to acquire understanding of their essential and '*enduring preferences, feedbacks, talents and values*' (Schein, 1978). The rich and fluid nature of identity inevitably opens up possibilities for ambivalence and ambiguity towards change and its effects on identity.

In adapting the narrative perspective Turner (1982) and Dutton *et al.* (2010) suggest that research on 'work-related identities', including professional identity and organisational identity, presumes that people want to create positive identities in their workplace. When thought of in conjunction with ideas of change, space and identity, we come to realise that change will trigger 'turf wars' where every organisational agent will be trying to protect and construct positive identities creating different social and power relations. Dutton *et al.* (2010) focus on what makes a work-related identity positive. In answering this question, they appraise the existing organisation studies research, as well as the literature in other disciplines, in order to advance different hypothetical perspectives that capture the positive characteristics of work-related identities and identity construction. They focus on positive work-related identity because they consider that work as a life sphere is

imperative for self-construction, especially as the majority of individuals spend most of their adult life working.

The current literature suggests that there is a connection between organisational space and occupational identity. However, the manner in which this relationship works is not yet fully understood and has not yet been accurately modelled or theorised to produce explanatory or predictive representations. Many researchers (Taylor and Spicer, 2007; Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010; Hancock and Spicer, 2011; Munro and Jordan, 2013) indicate that little consideration has yet been given to the links between ‘spaces, feelings, attributes and acts outside of some of the work in organisational culture and symbolism’ (Taylor and Spicer 2007, p.93). Hence, as illustrated by Brown and Humphreys (2006), more research is needed on how narratives of space serve to shape identities. The current study therefore investigates this gap, and specifically addresses the question of how occupational identity is mediated by space.

What appears to be missing from the organisation studies literature is an exploration of how space forms occupational identity. Thus, this study explores how professional selves are negotiated through space. To do this, this study explores how space is used as a political tool, representing power dynamics in the work place, as well as exploring participants’ ambivalence and ambiguity in responding towards change in space. Therefore, the central focus here is on the interplay between provisional selves and provisional spaces, and the interplay between sense of self and space.. In other words, it explores a previously neglected phenomenon whereby occupational identity is inherently socially constructed in relation to space.



## **1.6 Researching space and identity in post-primary education**

This study explores how the interactions between space and occupational identity can be explained. Guided by the literature review and personal interest, the chosen area for empirical research is the field of post-primary education up to and including A-levels.

This study researches two schools in the south-east and north of England. These schools are of interest because both institutions have had a new architectural structure and design and have spent on average over £32 million on the transformation, the aim of which was to provide a 21<sup>st</sup> century educational environment for teachers and students alike. The key changes that took place at both institutions were: the introduction of hot-desking, meaning that teachers no longer had their own space, introduction of independent learning, introduction of new technology, lack of personalised classrooms and facilitating students as required. Thus, it suggests that the field of education is one area in which there has been a deliberate drive to use new buildings and changed layouts as a political tool to serve educational purposes as discussed above.

The core staff delivering the education can be considered to be professionals, partly because professional qualifications are required to enter the profession, but more importantly because professional standards of behaviour, attitudes and achievement are required to be a successful teacher. Examining changes in the physical built environment of the education sector and understanding the effect of space on teachers' occupational identity sheds light on professional organisations. As mentioned above, in this sense it appears that even policy makers and the

government believe that space is an important component in forming individuals' sense of self and belonging, suggesting that space is manipulated as a key political tool to implement change in the profession. On the other hand, from the space and identity literature, it is not clear how professionals may respond to a threat to their identity, and why, when physical changes occur, they may take actions to acknowledge their threatened occupational identity. This uncertainty and anxiety makes it possible for us to examine teachers' ambivalence and ambiguity in responding to changing space. This research context, where there is a massive change in the way that teachers conducted their daily professional practice, provides a fruitful field in which to consider the interaction between space and occupational identity. Therefore, there may be an effect upon and consequence for the occupational identity of teachers and it appears that no previous studies have addressed this specific context.

### **1.7 Researching space through narrative**

In order to make sense of this deeply embedded dynamics of power, politics and identity we take a narrative approach which enables us to explore the interplay between changes in space and formation of occupational identity, revealed through narratives of a multitude of actors, namely, policy makers, head teachers and teachers. As a result, this thesis addresses the question: how is occupational identity mediated by space? In doing so, particular attention is paid to exploring the following narratives:

1. Narratives of imagining and realising 'the future' in accounts of policy makers and head teachers

2. Narratives of pedagogy and work: how teachers' professional work is anchored in space
3. Narratives of collegiality, distinction and ownership: how teachers' practices and identity are anchored in space:
4. Narratives of control and resistance: how the managers 'bought' the national narrative and 'sold' the changes to the teachers; how teachers, in turn, experienced this 'selling activity' in terms of the ensuing power dynamics; and how such changes created ambivalence and ambiguities in the response to the changes in space.

The nature of this research and the questions it intends to explore has led to the adoption of a broadly interpretivist philosophical approach. Interpretivism succinctly captures the subjective, constructive characteristic of occupational identity which may be influenced significantly by a professional interpretation of the meaning of space and space utilisation. Burrell and Morgan (1979a), Bryman (2004) and Saunders *et al.* (2007) argue that interpretivism emphasises '*the world as it is*' and focuses on the subjective meaningfulness of social truth. This approach is relevant to the present research because its ultimate aim is to achieve an in-depth understanding of how teachers experience and gain consciousness of the tangible environment around them and how, if at all, this affects their occupational identity. The goal is to better understand the situation, as well as the subjective importance which actors give to that situation (Bryman, 2004; Bryman and Bell, 2011) which presents an opportunity to put into words how teachers experience a new, adapted environment by concentrating on their use of language as well as their behaviour at work (Robson, 2002; Dey, 1993). It offers information about teachers' views of

contradictory and ambiguous behaviours, ambivalent interpretations and views, and relationships between teachers (Dey, 1993, p.28; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Finally, qualitative data are useful because the aim is to accumulate extensive data about ‘beliefs, behaviours, thoughts and communal perception’ of teachers in both institutions (Silverman, 1993; Robson, 2002; Hatch, 2002).

In this study, a disposable camera was given to each teacher who was selected to participate, as well as brief guidelines specifying the key research interests and essential features of the photographic task. The participants were asked to take photographs of objects and spaces that were ‘meaningful’ to them and said something about their personalities at work. The purpose of this was to explore how respondent-led photography engenders data that enhances understanding of organisational members’ identities at work. The use of cameras in this instance assisted the researcher in gaining a sense of what teachers thought about space, how they viewed it, what they thought was important. In short, it allowed teachers’ perceptions of space to be tracked. The interviews used visual data as a prompt: the teachers were asked why they took particular photos, what was in them, why they were significant to them, and what they said about the school, their profession and/or being a teacher there more generally.

The chosen research methodology was adopted because teachers’ accounts of their new organisational spaces and how these spatial accounts relate to their occupational identity require a thorough and rich understanding. Embracing this methodology enables the researcher to observe activities as they are undertaken, and to acquire an in-depth and clear understanding of teachers’ occupational identities (Godo, 2008). In both case studies, semi-structured interviews were conducted using visual data as

prompts, in this instance photographs taken by teachers (see Shortt and Warren, 2012), non-participant observations and documentary data. A variety of spatial layouts and designs of different sizes was investigated across the two schools. A total of 45 teachers participated in the research. They took part in respondent-led photographic tasks and subsequent photo-interviews, similar to techniques adopted by Shortt and Warren (2012) and Shortt (2014). However, whilst this approach provided a methodological foundation, it was necessary to reflect on contextual differences in the design of the current empirical work.

The findings of this study show that space should not be treated simply in terms of walls and physical appearance. This study raises awareness of how space forms and re-forms occupational identity. It does this by combining two streams of literature, Lefebvre (1991) and Ibarra (1999), and by arguing that there are multiple ways of thinking about studying the relationship between space and identity. Space has a special meaning for employees and is a tool that enables professionals to create a sense of who they are. It also allows them to express their sense of self by desiring, imagining and planning a physical space that corresponds to their professional role. Individuals only realise the importance of organisational space when changes to that physical space threaten their occupational identity. When space is taken away from professionals, they create their own physical boundaries that send messages to outsiders that they have control of their profession. They do this in order to protect their professional autonomy, feel noticed at the workplace and to imprint parts of their personality according to their professional needs.

By bringing together two streams of literature in understanding formation of identity through space, and showing the politicised and, resultantly, ambivalent nature of the

process, this study makes three main contributions. First, through Lefebvre's lens, it discusses how identity is mediated through space, discusses the politicisation of space, and shows that space can be used to emphasise or interrupt power relations in the workplace. Secondly, through application of Lefebvre's work, this study explains tensions created through spatial change and the implications that these have for the formation of occupational identity. Thirdly, this study takes Lefebvre's concern with tensions one step further by unpacking the complications posed by these for the formation, reflection and modification of occupational identity. To make sense of this, Ibarra's work has been introduced to argue that space is instrumental in reflecting and formulating new, sometimes provisional, sometimes conflicting, occupational identities and this leads to ambivalence and ambiguity in the profession.

## **1.8 Thesis outline**

The structure of this thesis is as follows.

**Chapter Two** provides an overview of the current literature on organisational space and identity. It starts by conceptualising space in organisation studies through Lefebvre's work and thinking. In doing so it examines his three views of space: behavioural, experiential and social. The second part of the literature review moves on to exploring different schools of thought on identity, namely, social identity theory, identity as discourse and identity as narrative. It then reviews Ibarra's work to study the complex understandings of professional identities. This is where we discuss concepts such as provisional selves, ambiguity and ambivalence. The

discussion then focuses attention on the literature on professional identity and teachers' professional practice and its relationship to organisational space.

**Chapter Three** lays out the ontological and epistemological position of this study and explains the research methodology adopted in this study in relation to existing literature on narrative and identity research. It also details the specific research methods utilised, in this case semi-structured interviews, visual data and non-participant observation as well as data collection and analysis processes.

**Chapter Four** provides contextual analysis, focusing on a description of the study context to show what had changed at both institutions, and outlining key changes and their rationale at both institutions. The chapter focuses on the overall policy landscape with the aim of discovering what government policies reveal about these changes.

**Chapter Five** provides the first part of the analysis, focusing on the narratives of imagining and realising 'the future' in the accounts of policy makers and head teachers. This chapter focuses on the representation of current policy-making at national and organisational levels in order to appraise the interplay of spatial change and identity. It seeks to assess how space and identity are represented in policy at national and organisational levels, concentrating on narratives drawn from national policy and planned space as narrated by managers, in this case school head teachers.

**Chapter Six** focuses on narratives of pedagogy and work: how teachers' work is anchored in space. It examines the interplay of space and identity in matters of professional practice. In essence, it addresses how changes in organisational space are experienced and narrated by teachers in professional practice, focusing on how

key changes, such as moving from a 'chalk and talk' teacher to a 'facilitator', have affected their professional roles. Importance is given to the introduction of technology, open shared space and safety, and to reflections on authority.

**Chapter Seven** focuses on narratives of collegiality, distinction and ownership: space makes us all teachers but also keeps us apart. It addresses ownership of physical space in the workplace and the way that teachers presume their collegiality. Attention is given to narratives that teachers convey in discussing their professional roles, and how they distinguish between 'us' and 'them'. In discussing teachers' more meaningful interpretations of space in both institutions, the chapter discusses spaces that evoke emotional feelings towards teachers' professional activities.

**Chapter Eight** is formed by four sub-sections. First, it focuses on narratives of control and resistance through exploring teachers' narratives through which teachers engaged with the way they felt about control and surveillance, their expressions of trust, and how they expressed resistance to change. Particular attention is paid to observations of teachers' social interactions, movements and narratives occurring on a daily basis in their workplace. Second, it focuses on how the managers 'bought' the national narrative and 'sold' the changes to the teachers, whereby we explore the way that managers (in this instance head teachers) interpreted the national narrative and the way that they sold it to teachers. In the third section we turn our attention to the experiences of teachers of the changes and the power dynamics that ensued, where we explore how such changes have an impact on their professional identity, and the effect on their daily practices. In the final part, we focus on teachers' ambivalent and ambiguous attitudes, often expressed by teaching staff during the fieldwork, towards the issue of changing space.



**Chapter Nine** discusses the findings, briefly recapping the purpose of the study, the key research gap in the literature, and the main aims and objectives of the thesis. It then explains the concept of the formation of teachers' occupational identity embraced in this study. Based on the findings, the chapter explains how space is involved in the formation of occupational identity, proposing that it does so in different ways, and discusses the practical contribution to knowledge, showing how these findings are beneficial to policy makers. The thesis concludes by explaining the limitations of the study and making suggestions for further research.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

As highlighted in the previous chapter, this study is concerned with the interplay between space, building and occupational identity. As such, it is necessary to review the literature on space, on identity and on the relationship between space and occupational identity. In doing so, this review broadly builds on two guiding frameworks of Lefebvre and Ibarra. The first part of the review begins by discussing Lefebvre's conception of space. Through Lefebvre's work, approaches to studying organisational space are scrutinised through different theoretical lenses, namely, modern, symbolic and postmodern, which helps us understand behavioural, experiential and social views of space respectively.

The second part of the literature review is driven by Ibarra's conceptualisation of identity. We start by providing an overview of the three schools of thinking: social identity theory, discourse identity, and narrative identity. Ibarra's ideas are used as a foundation to understand the complex nature of professional identities and the literature around them. This is where we discuss concepts such as provisional selves, ambiguity and ambivalence. Then, reference is made to current organisation studies literature on the relationship between organisational space and identity with a special focus on the practices of the teaching profession. The chapter concludes by identifying the research gap and outlines the research questions for this study.

## **2.2 Conceptualisations of space in organisation studies through Lefebvre's work**

In this section I review how space is conceptualised by organisation studies scholars, and establish the interpretation adopted for this thesis. Space emerges in both its physical and non-physical contexts in organisational analyses. Much of the literature uses the term 'space' to signify merely physical entities in organisations (buildings, walls, office layout, lighting, furniture, and so on) or the practices and familiarities of these entities, or alterations to and rearrangements of these entities (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010; Peltonen, 2012). Several contemporary studies (e.g. Dale, 2003; Kornberger *et al.*, 2006; Spicer and Taylor, 2007; Dale and Burrell, 2008) apparently endeavour to describe organisational space in this way.

Scholars' attention has recently been detached from the physical entities of the organisation. At times they have tracked such entities; however, their primary focus has been on non-physical objects, including organisational structures (Hatch, 1999), and structural lives in general (King, 2005). Scholars in such instances have embraced the word 'space' to portray, measure, and form a concept. In this body of literature, researchers frequently delineate practices of space rather unclearly.

A further stream of literature (Hernes, 2006; Chanlat, 2006) employs space in terms of the combination of its physical and non-physical meanings. For example, Hernes (2006) suggests that organisational space is an umbrella perception, and appears to use it interchangeably with 'organisational boundary'. Hence, he uses space to signify 'physical barriers', as well as the internal and external dimensions of organisational '*trust, loyalty, knowledge and meaning*' (Hernes, 2006, p.72). He

discusses means of financial jurisdiction as ‘physical space’, and subsequently uses the same phrase to portray psychological processes of cognition and learning. This indistinguishable utilisation of space to denote its physical and non-physical spaces should be avoided, since it removes its exclusive, analytical effectiveness. ‘Space’ and ‘boundary’ are linked perceptions; however, they do not entirely interconnect with each other. This is because the spheres of connotation of each concept are exposed by those of the other (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010).

All these scholars have focused on different aspects of space in their studies (i.e., physical, non-physical or both) yet they have all adapted Lefebvre’s conceptualisation of space. As highlighted by Hernes (2004), Lefebvre’s concept of space is relatively underdeveloped in the organisation studies literature. In this study, I argue that Lefebvre’s thinking about space is fundamental to understanding how the new organisational space at both institutions is sold to, interpreted and understood by the participants and how it shapes their daily practices. As such, Lefebvre’s concept helps us differentiate the perspectives of two different groups, namely, the managers (head teachers) who are accountable for introducing the initiative at the institution(s) and those who occupy space on daily basis (teachers). Therefore, I start by outlining Lefebvre’s theory of space and then utilise it to scrutinise these spaces in relation to the introduction of the new organisational space implemented at both institutions.

Lefebvre (1991) dismissed the idea that space is transparent and neutral, showing that for him, all space is there for a reason and is used for a purpose. He sees things moving. In other words Lefebvre’s work helps us to understand that through use of space we have contradictory views of space resulting in tension and conflict.

Lefebvre was the first author to show that the dynamic nature of space can create crisis and uncertainty. So in this study I am looking at space and identity from the narrative point of view. Lefebvre's work is part of that.

Lefebvre offers a Marxist explanation of conceptualisation of space and according to him, space, like any other product, arises from the process of social interactions. Space is neither a '*subject*' nor an '*object*' but rather a social reality – that is to say, '*a set of relations and forms*' (p. 116). It follows that space is in a continuous dialogue with activities:

*'Itself the outcome of past actions, social space is what permits fresh actions to occur, while suggesting others and prohibiting yet others... the social relations of production have a social existence to the extent that they have a spatial existence; they project themselves into a space, becoming inscribed there, and in the process producing that space itself.'* (Lefebvre 1991, p. 129)

Therefore, according to Lefebvre, both of the above-mentioned views, mental and physical, are uni-dimensional. Both interpretations focus on pre-existence, either of a notion or of an object. Human beings are intrigued by things by virtue of their unquestionable existence, these things become thus 'more "real" than reality itself' (p.81). It follows that their existence is not tied to humans or their conduct, and Lefebvre (1991) argues that this notion of 'fetishization' restricts our spatial understanding. He refers to it as the robust achievement of 'Marxist thought' (p.81). In the mental vision, notions of space are regarded as objective certainty, failing to consider how power interactions produce knowledge, and as such it is 'apparently,

and only apparently, extra-ideological' (p.6). Accordingly, Lefebvre objects to the 'physical' sight by pointing out that as objects are the product of human labour and activities, they always '*embody and dissimulate... social relationships of exploitation and domination*' (p.80–81). In the 'physical' view these objects are almost given 'more of an existence than the human "subject", his thoughts and his "desires" ' (p.29–30).

In drawing his work to a close, Lefebvre develops his ideas and builds them up into one drastic contention: the survival of capitalism is due to its construction of its own (urban) space, and revolt against it ought to happen by reconstruction of the same space through social activities (Harvey 1990; Soja 1996). This highlights how the production of the material dimension of space precedes a role in matters of social utilisation. Lefebvre reaches this conclusion by exploring how spatial understanding has evolved across a range of disciplines, as well as providing reasoning against two reductionist interpretations of space.

The first reductionist interpretation minimises space to a theoretical concept, namely that of a mental view. According to Lefebvre, scholars in a variety of disciplines – such as '*geographical, economic, demographic, sociological, ecological, political...*' (p.8) – attest to this view and its truthfulness in comprehending space. In this mental view, space is theorised and conceptualised, an example being the golden rule of numbers that represents a universal formulation. In addition to the mental view, Lefebvre also addresses what can be termed the '*physical*' view whereby space is equivalent to bodies in it, such as architectures, machines, manufactured goods, and so on. Space is thus seen as comprising the objects in it and there is little difference between space itself and the said objects. Lefebvre argues that the '*physical*' view is

utilised by semiologists in their attempts to understand space in a manner similar to reading a textbook (p.14–15), whereas other researchers subject items in space to ‘*classifications, descriptions and segmentations*’ (p.81) in order to understand space itself.

This leads us to the question of what are the original roots of space? Neither the mental nor physical view offers an answer. Lefebvre ironically submits that those in favour of the ‘mental’ view have to rely on an almighty God in order to give legitimacy to the objectivity of their concepts, whereas those in favour of a ‘physical’ viewpoint assume the unquestionable nature of spatial objects, which ‘*leaves us with a curious image of labour without labourers, products without production processes... and works without creators*’ (p.72). The question that Lefebvre is really focusing on can be seen as questioning the real nature of (the material-dimensional) space. Thus, by taking that nature into consideration, how may it further our knowledge?

In scrutinising space Lefebvre makes particular reference to three foundations, namely, conceived space, perceived space and lived space as discussed below. In the first two approaches he discusses the psychological and the physical perspectives. His belief was that these two approaches can provide accounts of what exists in space and produce a discussion on space. However, they do not provide ‘*knowledge of space*’ (p.7) because these perspectives are interconnected in an impasse. Lefebvre (1991, p.11) argues that they advocate merely ‘*one opposition*’; hence, they do not recognise the correlation ‘*from the conflict to alliance and back again*’ (p.12). The theory encompasses, and certainly it is not narrowed to, foundations accompanying

the psychological and physical perspectives of space. For the purposes of my thesis, the order of the three foundations has been changed, as shown below.

The first stage is the conceived space. The focus in this study is on architectural and managerial explanations for the design of two institutions. In other words, these spaces encompass management perceptions in the way they are designed and imposed on others (p.33). This perspective centres on the dominant space as discussed above, Lefebvre (1991; p.307). He conveys that this entails the importance of the *'written words, of plans and of the visual realm'* and it includes and connects *'scattered fragments or elements by force'*. Therefore, from this perspective daily activities and conditions, for example, are repeatedly being substituted by representations. As such here we question politics within organisations because space is occupied by *'a total subject which acts'* constantly to uphold and replicate *'its own conditions of existence'* (p.94). Lefebvre argues that the state was the complete *'political space'* and it signified *'that strategic space which seeks to impose itself as reality despite the fact that it is an abstraction, albeit one endowed with enormous powers because it is the locus and medium of power'* (p.137). In other words, for him the conceived space is the device of power and control.

Relating this to the present research includes analysing government documents and head teachers' narratives concerning the purpose of the new built schools. The present analysis examines the purpose and the account of the physical design of the new schools' architecture. This includes internal design, layout, special allocations and the styles of the equipment/furniture in the communal areas, such as staffroom and so on. As will be explained, both schools benefit from the new architectural



design as a result of a government initiative intended to build schools for the future and to improve the educational working environment. With concentration on conceived space, the analysis is based on the rationale for, and the response to, the change in the school's architectural design.

The second stage is perceived space (spatial practices in Lefebvre's terms). This is the materialisation of the philosophies in the outlines, materials, and the design of the school(s). This space embraces the interpretations of what can be communicated and known about space. Further to this, it also encompasses the movements of materials and data in, and across space, in daily organisational activities. Applying this to the present study, individuals (teachers) make sense of these spaces as they reflect on how they think schools ought to be and how they ought to work within them. Such images are projected into the space and become inscribed there. In this way imaginable spaces could develop in actual places, but are restricted by the expectations of others, and their judgments about the way space can be used. In this way, individuals construct lived spaces in the course of their daily collaborations. However, the probabilities of labelling those lived spaces are determined by the activities of '*perceived space*' which particularise restrictions on the prospects of what these spaces could turn out to be. For example, relating this to the present research, one level of analysis here is to observe the movements between departments and faculties throughout the school. In other words, teachers' practices at the workplace, such as their behaviour towards the new built school environment, are examined with the aim of scrutinising the everyday reality through space-related practices.

The third stage is lived space and, as emphasised by Lefebvre, this space scrutinises ‘*inhabitants and users*’ of organisational space, including their views, wishes, clarifications, imaginations and thoughts about space that they experience on a daily basis (p.39). Being more specific, this space focuses on employees’ personal and life narratives of organisational space. From this perspective physical space makes symbolic use of its objects. Here we refer to social spaces where individuals reside; there are a number of them that concentrate social life and enable ‘*actual or potential assembly at or around a single point*’ (Lefebvre 1991, p.101). From this perspective space is discussed as being actively shaped through both social relations and the obligations of discourses of space. A good example to illustrate this is teaching classrooms. Teachers and students make sense of the classrooms by constructing them as the places in which the teaching performance takes place. In this way, as Learmonth and Harding (2006) argue, we refer to them as classrooms, arranging them in a way that corresponds to the lived aesthetics, and manage ourselves within them to construct these spaces. For the present analysis lived spaces are complex because they are not just to be compared and contrasted, but more importantly they could be introduced and conflicting. They could also be dependent on each other and as such they could be produced in a way that conflicts with an individual’s perceptions.

Hence, relating this to the present research includes the interpretation that teachers give to their building, the feelings they show towards space change, and the effect that has on their teaching practices and on their professional role. This of course includes facilitating features in the school – flexibilities in terms of meeting their different teaching and social communal needs. Scholars who follow the interpretive

perspective of the experiential approach present a number of effective illustrations of lived space in organisations. Lefebvre (1991; p.33 and p.39) in talking about experiences implies '*underground*', '*artistic*' and frequently '*visual*' situations of individuals' daily existence.

These analyses remind us that Lefebvre's view is that organisational architecture fails to encapsulate the whole concept of organisational space. In fact, organisational space includes only one instance of the development of spatial production and that is an origin of space. That said, this cannot be acknowledged with spatial production. Further to this, Lefebvre advocates that collective associations in the workplace are subject to transformation and challenge. In addition, such challenge and transformation are accompanied by a produced space. In referring to Lefebvre's work on spatial approaches, the focus on the correlations between new power associations and new spatial constructions in corporations is somewhat encouraging. These links are potentially essential for advancing the social school's micro-level propositions. This understanding of space is useful because one of the main focuses in this study is to understand how power structures are represented at the new space, and the way it is constructed. This study reveals that an exploration of the 'construction of space' is a learning progression combining all three spatial concepts. In order to make sense of this, Lefebvre's categorisation of organisational space literature will prove to be useful. This is what we turn to next.

### **2.3. Approaches to studying organisational space**

When we go beyond the physical dimensions of space we start to appreciate that space impacts working professionals in different ways. According to Hatch (2006),

organisational scholarship on the impact of space that has adopted Lefebvre's approach has gone through three main phases: '*modern, symbolic/interpretive and postmodern*', as will be discussed below.

### ***2.3.1 The modern approach: a behavioural view of space***

From this perspective, space as conceived by managers and implemented into the workplace, unproblematically, is instrumental in shaping and modifying employee behaviour. According to some researchers (e.g. Hassard, 2001), scientific management is centred not only on the management of time but also space. Scientific management's main assumption is that schemes and implementations are causally related, and this, in turn, relates closely to the main principles of space. These principles are that space plays a practical role in boosting organisational efficiency, and this role is largely dependent on the regulatory effect of space on employee conduct (Hancock and Spicer, 2011). Through machines (spatial artefacts) employees' behaviours are controlled in scientifically managed factories. For example, Taylor applied science to '*every single act*' of bricklayers (Taylor, 1947, p.64), bringing in adjustable scaffolds to optimise the distance between the wall and the mortar box and the height of the operation platform, and thus decreasing the average bodily motions of employees from twenty to just five (Taylor, 1947).

The causal relationship between space and employee conduct, which is at the core of Taylor's scientific management, utilised by twentieth-century industrial managers is further reflected in the allocation of office spaces. This causal link is as prominent today as it was in Taylor's day, evidenced by managerial magazines and books instructing managers to review their offices and take care over different aspects of

the office, such as equipment, furniture dimensions and layout, as these factors are seen to be directly relevant to the efficiency of work in the office (Salmon, 1979; Altman, 1975; Altman and Chemers, 1979; Drucker, 1993; Eley and Marmot, 1995). It is not just the physical layout of offices that is relevant, as there is a fourth dimension, which is its effect on actions. This presupposes a behavioural effect in addition to the physical dimensions of organisational space.

Office layout and space, in general, may direct employees' physical movements when communicating (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). According to Parsons (1976), employees are more likely to limit their communication to those who are based on the same floor, rather than communicating with those on other floors, despite the existence of elevators in some workplaces. Furthermore, setting up nodal spaces where employees are likely to meet, for example drinking fountains and coffee machines (Brookes and Kaplan, 1972), and altering seating arrangements, such as having employees seated face to face rather than back-to-back (Ornstein 1989), increases communications in the workplace. Establishing a '*non-territorial office*' by removing walls and replacing individual desks with central communication points has been proposed by Allen (1977) as a way of improving information exchange. Recent empirical studies have further affirmed the view that office layout has a direct effect on employees' communication habits (Boutellier *et al.*, 2008; Hancock and Spicer, 2011; Munro and Jordan, 2013).

A further point to be made concerns the role that space plays in the cognitive facilitation of behaviours that are crucial for achieving organisational aims. For example, the human cognitive process can be said to be composed of different stages, each of which can be achieved through specific actions. It follows that, by

installing chalkboards on which employees may write ideas in communal office areas, knowledge synthesis in creative thinking is enhanced (Kristensen, 2004). The way in which employees regard the office environment has an orienting effect on creative and learning behaviours.

Lating (2006) articulates that sometimes organisational architecture is designed in enormous 'open spaces' lacking privacy and solid walls, as using glass rather than concrete walls makes the office visible (Backhouse and Drew, 1992). Dale and Burrell (2008) insist that such unusual layouts are rooted in management's efforts to adapt workers' identities into instruments acceptable to the company (Hancock and Spicer 2011). It is argued that collaborative and supportive teamwork is more likely to take place when employees are able to see their colleagues constantly (Haner, 2005). Therefore, in contemporary organisations that value flexibility, innovation and learning, space plays an important functional role in organisational success (Hase and Heerwagen, 2000; Robertson and Huang, 2005; Chan *et al.*, 2007). Salmon (1979, pp.27–8) proposes that desks should not be too narrow. Such discussions relate to arguments pertaining to open-plan workplaces. According to Sundstrom *et al.* (1982), for example, it appears that walled/closed workplaces positively influence the job happiness of workers. At the same time, however, they state that no transformations in job happiness are perceived in new open spaces. In addition, Hatch (1987) claims that the elimination of tangible obstructions in workplaces diminishes organisational interaction, whereas other researchers argue the opposite outcome when such changes occur in organisations (Yanow, 1998; Yanow 2010).

So far, this chapter has discussed the perspective of researchers adopting a functionalist standpoint on space, meaning that they distinguish space as a sub-system of organisations in which efficient presentations (efficacy in guarding assembly lines, anticipating unwanted activities, guiding forms of interaction and encouraging original ideas) determine organisational achievement. From the above-mentioned analysis, it can be argued that organisational space in this context is comparable with Morgan's (1986) metaphor of a '*causal machine*'. Morgan refers to commencing with raw items (spatial design) and developing consistent goods (behaviours). In this instance, the machine is causal in that space, and initiates activities with its absolute objects and tangible presence (Taylor and Spicer, 2007; Peltonen, 2012). It has also been established that from this perspective organisational space can be viewed as a form of control and a way to get the best out of the workforce. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore to what extent this perspective is adopted by the management team (the government and head teachers) and how space is used as a political tool in making the present changes in schools. We should notice however, that the analyses thus far do not consider employees' experiences and interpretations of their new organisational space. Therefore, to make sense of changes in the organisational it is also important to consider how employees perceive new space.

### ***2.3.2 The symbolic approach: an experiential view of space***

Duffy (1997) states that in the 1990s there was a major shift in how society perceived 'new space' compared with half a century previously. According to Duffy (1997), walls and even hallways are constructed to enhance a company's operations, firstly through the homogenisation of movements of objects and groups, and

secondly by requiring certain work practices. Myerson and Ross (2003) support this claim, suggesting that an individual's identification of the workplace as shared and utilising these provisions for ordinary practical functions is enhanced by workplaces packed with clear interior dividers and creative features. Gagliardi (1996) and Carr and Hancock (2003) emphasise that there are two distinct forms of experience: including symbolic sensemaking; and sensory understandings (Hancock and Spicer, 2011), including aesthetic feelings and reactions. Such claims of organisational scholarship raise uncertainty as to whether the two forms of experience are distinguishable, and at what stage the difference can be detected.

Researchers who scrutinise organisational symbolism and establish the experimental turn in spatial analyses (e.g. Turner, 1990) occasionally do not formulate such distinctions. Indeed, Turner (1990, p.1) incorporates meaning and the 'sensuous' in the open phrase of 'the symbolic' to signify propensity in matters of sensemaking. From this view, it can be argued that individuals make sense of their self based on their experiences in the workplace, and this is an area of research that has been taken for granted. Fahy *et al.* (2013) show that space has historically been studied in terms of control, and little attention has been given to studying space from an interpretivist perspective. This is a necessary perspective from which there has recently been a trend in studying space, including Shortt's (2014) work on liminality.

Scholars studying how the arrangement of organisational aesthetics shapes individuals' perceptions of organisations (Gagliardi, 1990; Strati, 1999; Linstead and Hopfl, 2000) claim that aesthetic and sensory understandings pertain particularly to pre-cognitive beliefs and reactions. As such, they ought to be distinguished, particularly in terms of the 'empirical' stance, as symbolic and cognitive judgments



(Gagliardi, 1990; 1996). From these analyses, it can be concluded that these differences underscore the instant and, to a certain extent, uncomplicated nature of sensory involvement. More recent research on organisational aesthetics, including Hancock and Tyler (2007) and Hancock and Spicer (2011), proposes that the distinction, although analytically convincing, is frequently difficult to relate to empirical scholarship. Thus, drawing on these reflections in the 'experiential' discipline, scholars seek collectively to classify symbolic and aesthetic methods in terms of organisational space.

Moving on from distinctions between symbolic and aesthetic, two distinctive perspectives are perceptible within the 'experiential' scholarship domain. At one end of the spectrum, attention is increasingly being paid to organisational culture, specifically in the 'ideational' method, defining culture as a web of joint connotations, norms and morals buried beneath more noticeable realities (Keesing, 1974). As such, this conceives spatial artefacts as acting as channels for these superior communications (Gagliardi, 1990). Much scholarship in experiential studies embraces structural practice and underlines organisational space as being fixed, with common and frequently administratively-explained messages. Yanow (1998) argues that such messages encompass the fundamental structure of daily practices, and are interpreted in uncomplicated ways with the connotations and emotions they convey (Hochschild 1983; Yanow, 2010; Yanow and van der Haar 2013). Thus, from analysis of this body of literature, it can be argued that researchers are seeking to answer multiple questions, including what is meant by prearranged messages, who determines them, and why are they prearranged.

### *Prearranged messages*

Spatial messages are prevalent within firms. For example, Sassoon (1990) examines colour arrangements and suggests that grey conveys impressions of uncertainty. Similarly, Rosen *et al.* (1990) and Baldry (1997) claim that hierarchical status arrangement is established by superior and more spacious offices, superior positions within the organisation, well-located admittance to amenities, and the ability to individualise one's own office (Daskalaki *et al.*, 2008). Proffitt and Zahn (2006) claim that uniformity in workplace appearance and organisational objectives improves a company's legitimacy. As illustrated above, a company typically encompasses a range of spatial meanings; however, individuals may opt to pay attention to a few as specifically significant (Yanow, 1998; 2010; Beyes and Michels, 2012). For example, employees may recognise how organisational space is structured and what their values are, but they may give special meanings to their office because that is where they work on a daily basis. Of course, this depends on the organisation's societal, cultural and corporate environments. Berg and Kreiner (1990) emphasise that approaches to assigning space are utilised equally by organisations that promote an individual stamp of identity. Myerson and Ross (2003) also reinforce the importance of artefacts by articulating that energetic patterns of colour designs are utilised by research and development organisations, with the aim of conveying a message of being passionate and pioneering. In applying this to the present study, teachers are placed in a new organisational space, and it would be interesting to explore how they perceive that space – its politics, structure and what narratives they would give to their new organisational layout, and to explore how they interpret it in terms of their professional practices.

### *Determination of prearranged messages*

Executives and managers of companies are direct and very noticeable sources of spatial messages. Amendments to a workplace usually signify new management tactics. For example, Berg and Kreiner (1990) and Schmitt, *et al.*, (1995) show that shifting into brand new buildings or sophisticatedly refurbished workplaces communicates to customers and workers attractive corporate practices of goods/products and personalities/identities (Hancock and Spicer, 2011). Interestingly, Yanow (1995) shows that spatial messages are similarly crucial to achieving firms' objectives for companies, including government-funded civic places, that provide amenities for crowds of space users (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010).

That said, it must be noted that construction planning is a complicated process and frequently entails lengthy dialogues between disparate groups, depending on their involvement in a company. In designing a new organisational space, different stakeholders' opinions are embodied in determining how 'spatial messages' about practices are prearranged, including management, architects (Marcus, 2006), and local government (Pedersen, 2006).

This perspective pursues the view that there are collectively translated and decoded places/spaces that have been overlooked by researchers (Tuan, 1974; Bell, 1997; Gieryn, 2000), and arguing that there are constantly subjectively significant spaces. This claim is supported by Casey (1993), who proposes that space/place is packed with individuals' thoughts, imaginations and personal accounts, and these are not significant to outsiders who do not experience or share these spaces (Yanow, 2010;

Dale and Burrell, 2011; Hancock and Spicer, 2011; Munro and Jordan, 2013). Dale and Burrell (2002) show that scholars of the constructivist perspective accept that spatial artefacts are a means of expression of representative connotations and aesthetic significances.

Accordingly, scholars of the constructivist perspective focus on ways in which spatial messages differ from the initial intention of the planners. Yanow's (1998) research on museums illustrates this point. In her research, she walks around the museum buildings and observes various entrances, concluding that museums convey authoritative narratives by specifying where people go in and where they set off from during their visits (Yanow, 2006; van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). From this perspective, it can be argued that, to make sense of a new organisational space, the building must be lived in and experienced in order to construct narratives of what this space means to its occupiers. Halford (2004) highlights that, from the management perspective, the elimination of the private workspace signals the encouragement of better and more transparent interactions between colleagues in the organisation. However, such an explanation is not shared by non-managerial members, who interpret such change as an indication of spatial dispossession.

Also, Dober and Strannegard (2004) suggest that meanings given to artefacts are continuously reconstructed by workers of diverse cultural backgrounds. This claim is reinforced by Warren (2002), whose research asked workers to capture photographs of workplace surroundings. Her research finds that workers' aesthetic attitudes cannot be articulated before being put into practice, i.e. through pre-planned spatial assumptions. Hence, scholars adopting the constructivist perspective regard companies' space as inherently independent of its empirical influences. According to

Cairns *et al.* (2003), researchers adopting this perspective believe that spatial meanings may be manipulated to represent management jurisdiction. That said, they underline that this jurisdiction is disclosed in features of spatial inhabitants' lifespan practices.

In conclusion, researchers adopting the experiential perspective move beyond the behavioural school in understanding organisational space. They clarify, apparently more persuasively, why a particular organisational space encourages specific organisational behaviours or actions. For the present study this perspective involves understanding the relationship between the teachers' imagined space and the lived one, and drawing out their narratives of, and feeling towards, the change. For example, teachers would reflect on the design of their social gathering space, and compare it with what they had imagined by drawing out the differences. From this perspective, space is not the key to forming actions through the physical thickness of walls; rather, importance is assigned to meanings and interpretations (Fahy *et al.*, 2013). It is also believed that space creates a positive environment that rationalises and drives courses of action (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). As such, organisational space is often characterised by a conflict of authority.

### ***2.3.3 The postmodern turn: towards an understanding of social space***

The hypothesis of the social perspective is that organisational space is a physical personification of social interactions. Researchers adopting this approach regard 'social relations in space' as a broad notion, and as such they have offered a number of clarifications regarding the foundation of societal interactions and their contributions in organisational space (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). Scholars

such as Baldry *et al.* (1997) focus their research on workforce development concepts. Their emphasis is on the design construction patterns of contemporary workplaces. They argue that contemporary executive headquarters sweatshops result in executive attempts to increase workspace control. From this perspective, a shared interaction assigned in organisational space is a mediation between the administration and other social associations.

Crang and Thrift (2000) state that in the 1990s a ‘spatial turn’ was experienced throughout a range of different social science fields. As highlighted by Soja (1996), space has been progressively represented as a crucial clarifying notion and the process of sensing, together with a long-established exploration of social phenomena. Researchers following this perspective argue that space should be acknowledged as fundamentally social (Dale and Burrell, 2011; Munro and Jordan, 2013). The physical representation of space is the precise personification of social interactions, and the central function of space in social terms does not rest merely in its ‘action effects’ on individuals or the representative narratives it articulates. This is the fundamental belief of scholars adopting this perspective (e.g. Ford and Harding, 2004; Halford, 2005; 2006; Dale and Burrell, 2002; 2008; 2011; Kornberger, *et al.*, 2006; Warren, 2005; Taylor and Spicer, 2007; Hancock and Spicer, 2011). In demonstrating the importance of the ‘spatial turn’, scholars reappraise the views of the behavioural and experiential disciplines with a contemporary, social perception of space. As a result, they construct two linked propositions regarding organisational space: social associations in space and space–action debate.

#### *Social associations in space*

Lawrence and Low (1990) highlight that anthropological and geographical scholars reveal how constructed surroundings vary from urban environments to structural designs, implanted with social interactions. Studies have presented a crucial position in the '*spatial turn*'. For example, Gregory and Urry (1985, pp.3–4) claim that spatial structure is currently viewed as a vehicle by means of which social relationships are 'produced and reproduced', and not simply a ground in which social existence 'unfolds' (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010).

As a result, geographers have concentrated on the dominant inequities entrenched in town environments. For instance, Davis (1990) shows that modern shared spaces are created to prevent deprived individuals from interacting with the wealthy. Similarly, Soja (2000) emphasises that societal (in)equality is created in the transportation structures of conurbations, and architects such as Hanson and Hillier (1985) and Marcus (2006) suggest that buildings reveal the societal guidelines of their residents. For example, as Martin (2003) argues, the glass dividing wall of IBM head office represents a fence, while still conveying a sense of contemporary organisational practices. Hence, these analyses are reminders that space/place is the physical manifestation of the arrangement of societal parameters (Spicer and Taylor, 2007).

Referring back to Lefebvre, we find reference to the 'dominant' as well as 'dominated' characteristics of the conceived and lived spaces. Lefebvre noticeably assigned these spaces to separate collections of social performers. For example, he assigns conceived space to organisers and the lived space is that of concealed performers. In scrutinising the scholarship of the social approach, it appears that several scholars have followed this conceptualisation. For instance, Ford and

Harding (2004), Taylor and Spicer (2008), and Dale and Burrell (2008, 2011) make a clear distinction between the 'dominant' being the conceived space and the 'dominated' being lived space. As such, they fit in the organisational life as the configuration of spaces of the management and workers. The importance of this interpretation can be established by the multiple 'interrelations' and 'oppositions' which Lefebvre pursued in his work. What are the interrelations between dominant and dominated spaces and what are the consequences when these two are in opposition?

Other scholars concentrate on the historical standpoint and have a noticeably Foucauldian way of thinking. Researchers such as Prior (1995) examine progress in the architectural arrangements of numerous hospital wards in the nineteenth century, which ranged from open-plan structures to very separate workspaces and then back to open-plan creations. Prior claims that such adaptations are the outcomes of societal meanings of illness at various stages in history (Taylor and Spicer, 2007).

A further perspective accommodates a cultural account of societal dealings in organisational space. From this perspective, as shown by Sundin (1998), the development of a company's contemporary high-tech equipment is complemented by management determination to transform workspace gender management, because the 'spatial artefact' of the equipment has inherently male connotations. Scholars adopting this perspective, including Nipper-Eng (1995), investigate spatial restrictions across places of work and the home as representing cultural detachment between occupational and domestic, construction and reconstruction, and 'the personal' and 'the everyone' (Yanow, 1998; Munro and Jordan, 2013). Fleming and Spicer (2004) show that by dissolving material restrictions through the integration of



household activities in the workplace, supervisors seek to redefine personal and shared domains, and in turn accomplish organisational objectives.

Having said that, we should be aware of the fact that the above-mentioned perspective originates from a theoretical perspective that takes inspiration from other sociological viewpoints, established as valuable by present scholarship regarding organisational space. In terms of the literature reviewed, questions that may arise here concern clarification of whether reference is being made to social space or physical space. Likewise, questions may arise as to whether it is really essential that the three perspectives are distinguished and, more specifically, why experiential and social spaces should be distinguished, since both approaches have similar propositions.

Dale (2005) and Dale and Burrell (2008; 2011), underline that the physical and social aspects of space are interlinked: physical expresses the social. Two further assertions can be made to explain the second question.

Firstly, despite the other two schools' inputs towards an understanding of organisational space, scholars adopting this perspective are inclined to contribute to the study of space through other topics. For them, there is a connection between the 'social turn' of organisational space and the 'spatial turn' of organisational studies (Taylor and Spicer, 2007; Hancock, 2009; Hancock and Spicer, 2011). An underlying assumption in the spatial turn is a relatively new, social view of space. It follows that, according to scholars, now is the '*time for space*' (Taylor and Spicer, 2007), to '*bring space back in*' (Kornberger and Clegg, 2004). In other words, as

reinforced by Hernes (2004), and more recently by Hancock and Spicer (2011), it is time to see explorations of space as a flourishing topic of organisation studies.

Secondly, there is limited literature on space as representing social interactions. It provides a theoretical framework in which the physical aspects of organisational space and daily interactions in organisational practice exist in a mutual relationship, each influencing the formation of the other. Therefore, from a theoretical perspective, the social approach goes a step further than the experiential approach towards explaining the relationship between space and behaviour. From this perspective, this study explores not only the narratives of what space means for teachers, but also their interactions in their institutions: how they make sense of these and how power dynamics are practised by teachers and the management team. Having said that, these perspectives are used in this study in order to gain an understanding of the rationale and the dynamics of the organisational space change, its symbolic message, how teachers experience the organisational space, and how their social interactions are affected by it. The second sub-proposition of the social approach – ‘space–action debate’ – will now be reviewed where the main contribution of this thesis lies.

### *Space–action debate*

This perspective has its roots in the work of Henri Lefebvre (1991). In his opening publication, Lefebvre (1991, p 170) portrays it as being the main ‘catalyst’ for the foundation of spatial philosophy in the Anglo-American scholarship. Lefebvre viewed space as being an essential vibrant progression of designing and redesigning societal practices. Lefebvre highlights that social space is shaped by previous

activities, and consequently, produces different arrangements in a selective manner (Zhang *et al* 2007). Hence, Lefebvre argues that space '*is at once result and cause, product and producer*' (p 142). As will be discussed in greater detail later on, his work has been a fundamental premise for several scholars of the social school.

From the space–action perspective, space is perceived as engaging with daily activities and interactions in institutions (Yanow, 1998). Arguably, this perspective has progressed from the foundation of two theoretical strands. Firstly, Dale and Burrell (2008) introduce the concepts of positioning and enthrallment. They claim that power constructed in an institutional space is understood in the function of social interactions (Yanow, 2010; Dale and Burrell, 2011). These scholars also propose that power governs daily activities and collaboration within firms from employees' subjectivities, as they are the ones who use space on a daily basis (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). Space can be used as a creative means for imposing power dealings in organisations. As such, organisational spaces are viewed as the personification of societal associations, and are exposed to disagreements and rearrangements (Yanow, 2010; Dale and Burrell, 2011). They propose that power is implied in the wake of the certain presence of institutional constructions. As such, they are protected when they are unnoticeable. The said scholars propose that 'power' governs in daily activities and collaboration within firms from employees' subjectivities as they are the ones who use space on a daily basis (Marrewijk and Yanow 2010). A good example reinforcing such a claim comes from Gillen (2006). Gillen argues that certain modern organisational architecture is constructed in such a way that it looks like communal roads.

Dale and Burrell (2008; 2011) link spatial structures in architecture with the means of managing, and warn their readers that resistant activities are dominant in organisations. They bring to light different organisational spaces occupied by the dominant management foundations of '*control and instrumentality*'. Similarly, Kornberger and Clegg (2004) claim that 'dis-organised' spaces may be influenced in a way that contrasts with extremely prearranged spaces; that is, rather than increasing managerial control, 'dis-organised' space may reduce it. They further argue that a physical building has numerous spatial characteristics, one of which is 'liquidity'. They state that '*liquid architecture*' does not intend to 'impose a hierarchy'; instead, it constitutes imaginative powers that '*flow, stream and move in space*' (Kornberger and Clegg, 2004, p.1107) and embrace '*the strategy of the void*' (Kornberger, *et al.*, 2006, p.155). Such focus does not establish areas for functions; rather, it permits dissimilar and contradictory '*interpretations and uses to occur*' (p.156). As such, institutional architectures may be planned to offer manifold arrangements of action, thereby developing a source of new power interactions within corporations (Hancock and Spicer, 2011; Knights 1990). In exploring the question of resistance indicated by Dale and Burrell, we ought to explore the relationship between new power relations and new spatial formations.

From a Foucauldian concept of power, space can be viewed as an exercise of 'power' inside organisational scholarships, and this is a complex conception. Foucault repeatedly considers 'power' in connection with some persons and social establishments. He further argues that this thought does not represent his interpretation of 'power'. As such, critical organisational scholars promote the notion of an interpersonal conception of power. A good example comes from Clegg's

(1989) research who proposes that ‘power’ is not an element that is situated with dependent properties of institutions or with the control of workforce progression. In contrast, ‘power’ is an effect of associations, meaning it is constantly ‘action-dependent’. A similar view is shared by Knights and Willmott (1999). Clegg believes that social relations produce ‘power’, yet simultaneously the same interactions shape and challenge the notion of power.

Furthermore, van Marrewijk and Yanow (2010) suggest that it is necessary to know how the physical and social functions of space correlate in terms of the development of new power associations in organisations, and also how new-found power dealings are conveyed by the different ‘material spaces’. Dale and Burrell (2008) suggest that for individuals, ‘enactment’ is the method by which they emplace and entrance themselves in their organisational subjectification, which is in line with the argument of Hancock (2009), who suggests that the notion of ‘enactment’ is treated as a channel through which enthralled organisational inhabitants are ‘subjectified’ (Hancock, 2009; Hancock and Spicer, 2011). This notion of enactment helps us to understand that organisational spaces are subsisted, how they are managed throughout, how they are practised across movement, and the ‘power’ influence (Hancock 2009; Hancock and Spicer 2011).

In discussing this in terms of power–space debate, we can track back in history, for example by looking into the work of Pearson and Richards (1994), who emphasise that individuals give multiple meanings to spaces and the spatial arrangements. They believe those spaces and the spatial arrangements ought to be summoned in the setting of ‘*practice and recurrent usage*’ (p 5). Warren’s (2005) discussion of ‘hot-desking’ can be seen as an example of how, through practice, space and spatial

arrangements can gain different meanings. Warren (2005) emphasises that the introduction of 'hot-desking' by management teams has not provided an effective and flexible workplace, as initially planned, because workers create their own little groups. Edenius and Yakhlef (2007) also highlight that the purpose of open-plan work surroundings was to reduce group barriers between workers in the workplace. The outcome of this, by contrast, has been an escalation of new, unspoken rules stipulating inflexible arrangements of social relations. Thus, it is arguable that administratively-planned spaces have their own drive in challenging and restructuring spaces as well as affecting activities and interactions in daily organisational lives.

Halford (2005) furthers this debate by highlighting that the 're-spatialisation' of in-house places is brought about by changed employee interactions in 'hybrid' corporations (Yanow, 1998). This is true of corporations with increased home-based working and online interactions. Halford (2005) claims that this 're-spatialisation' is an under-researched area of spatial scholarship (Hancock and Spicer, 2011). On the other hand, recent literature reveals widespread research focusing on resistance (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010; Hancock and Spicer, 2011). Pile (1997, pp.3–4) argues that resistance engages, organises and generates different 'spatialities' from those expressed by domination and misuse. Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) suggest that workers misuse murky hallways and block out corners in their workplace for mischievous actions, such as smoking (Collinson, 1992) and chatting (Pringle, 1989). Applying this to the present study, the teachers were located in a new organisational space, offering an opportunity to explore whether they resisted the new ways of working and socialising in their new teaching environments. Equally,

from the lived experience they reflect back on the power dynamics and discuss their comfort and discomfort regarding changes to their teaching practices and their professional role. Munro and Jordan (2013) argue that individuals adjust space to fulfil their professional needs, and this present research seeks to explore this concept by investigating how personal spaces are created when space is taken away from individuals. Importantly, it is necessary to discover whether new spatial arrangements in the workplace have been created with workers' positioned and 'enacted' spatial lives in mind. Therefore, the question which arises is: What happens when space is created without taking into account employees' perceived and lived spaces? Such enquiries are crucial in uncovering the space–action debate, and these are questions which are not answered by interpretations of architecture (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010; Hancock and Spicer, 2011; Munro and Jordan, 2013).

Following empirical scholars such as Watkins (2005) and Hancock and Spicer (2011), this thesis maintains that an empirical method is needed to strengthen and deepen the social school's propositions, to enable researchers to examine organisational architecture beyond its physical appearance. The existing literature research suggests that individuals' daily activities and interactions in organisations are influenced by the planned designed spaces, and they have their own motivation in questioning and restructuring these spaces. The characteristics of such new associations are difficult to identify without examining spatial developments. At this stage, some academics might not be comfortable with the claim that 'dis-organised' structures inevitably exempt workers from the fear of control. The question which one needs to ask here is to what extent these possessions can be considered as encouraging work. In this study we have a situation where teachers are placed in the

new organisational space and from this perspective we explore how it creates imaginative powers and how it works out in practice.

Although there is a growing body of research in studying the space–action debate this continues to be an underdeveloped area. The question that arises from here is that if organisations are made from both social interactions and physical appearance, is there a link between these two in the construction of new power relations in organisations? In what way, if at all, are power relations conveyed by new architectural design? How does space creates new power relationships? This remains an underdeveloped area of research and more specifically, the concept of ‘representation’ is not exploited to answer such questions.

From the literature in the social school these relationships are the rational interpretation. This is because through this exploration we make sense of the conceptualisation of space and they establish the fundamental substantiation for the ‘space–action debate’. From the space–action debate we explore the political question. For example, if new imposed/planned power relations formed by our daily activities are withdrawn through the limitation of usage and allocation of space, is it inappropriate to resist this change? What happens to them when they react in this particular way? To make sense of such questions we ought to explore the relationship between social reactions and power relations to space. Thus, this leads us to question that if the planned organisational space is organised in a way that represents new power relations in organisations, how can we then make sense of such new relations if we do not study spatial formation and purpose behind it? It could be the case that such changes are aimed to provide just positive effects, but we



might expect surprising things to happen, and as such to what extent can the surprising things be labelled encouraging?

#### **2.3.4 Summary**

The progress and development of spatial scholarship by organisational academics has been outlined in this section, distinguishing three schools of thought. In this section we have outlined the way that Lefebvre's work is used as a guideline framework of this study. Reflecting on the historical origins of scholarship on organisational space, distinct fashions arise in interpretations of space, ranging from behavioural to experiential and finally social (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). Each perspective encompasses a distinct viewpoint on the characteristics of space and builds on the preceding one. Behavioural scholars view space as one component contributing to organisational achievement and, as such, its importance is confined to a functional level. In contrast, experiential scholars recognise only that space has explanatory value for occurrences in organisations. Lastly, for social scholars (Taylor and Spicer, 2007; Dale and Burrell, 2008; 2011), space epitomises understanding the narratives of how organisational space is understood by employees by focusing on their interactions and sensemaking in daily activities (Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012). As such, these are perfect tools through which ordinary organisational life can be explored and comprehended (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). It is a tool that is utilised in this study. This is because the focus of the present research is to understand teachers' narratives based on how they experience space through their daily interactions and collaborations with work colleagues and how that constructs their occupational identity. In order to make sense of teachers'

interpretations and perceptions of change, it is necessary to examine the extant literature on identity. Therefore, the next section will provide an understanding of how teachers' occupational identity is formed and how identity can be studied. To conclude, what we found from this review of the literature so far, is that Lefebvre's triad approach to space helps us to explain the complexity and fluidity in spatial change, and that researchers have used his conceptualisation of change in discussing tensions and contradictions in spatial change. Particularly, the space–action debate has been useful in unpacking some important questions. Given the fact that Lefebvre is a Marxist, and hence thinks in terms of tensions and contradictions, focusing only on his work to make sense of identity change and (re)construction is insufficient. Therefore, we better appreciate the fluidity, reconstructions and ambiguity involved in identity work by scrutinising Ibarra's work on identity. This is where we next turn.

## **2.4 The construction of individual identity**

This section reviews the current organisation studies literature on identity. Various routes have been taken in the literature on identity (Collinson, 2003; Pullen *et al.*, 2007; Burke and Stets, 2009; Alvesson, 2010). There are three main streams in this literature: social identity, discourse identity and narrative identity. The social identity approach emphasises group identification in the creation of identity. The discourse approach draws on the function of cultural discourse in identity construction. Lastly, the narrative approach accentuates the reflexive method of acquiring life narratives to form identity.

This study explores how narrative identity intervenes between many conflicting personal and occupational identities at work to shape possible interpretations of self. A review of the literature on identity reveals that there is an absence of scholarship on narrative scopes of identity (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). Whilst it is not the aim of this study to provide a thorough discussion of identity, it provides a short overview of definitions in recent literature. These range from describing identity as essentially attributes and traits which form a sense of self, to theorising identity as being established through social interaction and reflection (Ashcraft, 2013). In addition, there is continuing discussion with regard to the comparative fluidity of identity over time (Ibarra, 1999; Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010; Angouri 2012). For this study, the guiding theoretical framework in making sense of identity is that of Ibarra's (1999) work on formation of occupational identity. As such, analysis here aims to establish the need for a narrative perspective on identity by utilising Ibarra's (1999) concept to help us understand the formation of occupational identity. This chapter therefore concentrates specifically on the theoretical perspectives utilised. The second aim of this chapter is to apply a narrative perspective to professional identity, with the aim of making a theoretical contribution and shaping the study of professional identity.

Alvesson (2010, p.209) reviews the scholarship in terms of multiple descriptions of identity, each using a different method to conceptualise identity, and highlights dissimilarities in relations of '*agency and context, ambiguity and coherence*'. In contrast, Hatch and Schultz (2004) examine organisational identity in terms of identity scholarship more generally. They take a historical approach and start by studying the foundations of identity theory and social identity theory more generally,

before focusing on initial advancements and contemporary progress in organisational identity theory, with a discussion of the influence of discourse and narrative on identity. With reference to Pullen *et al.* (2007), the authors study theories and approaches connected with identity, and provide a comprehensive review of the notions of ‘identification’, ‘identity deconstruction’ and ‘identity’. They also concentrate on empirical approaches to examining identity using these different approaches.

Unlike Alvesson and other scholars mentioned above, in this study the scholarship reviewed concentrates on three separate hypothetical perceptions embedded within different ontological and epistemological positions. In this way, the literature review is arranged around a number of academic standpoints and includes conceptualisations of what identity is and how it is feasible for scholars to try to understand identity. This approach offers a renewed concept of identity.

#### ***2.4.1 Social identity theory***

Social identity theory postulates that a social psychological perspective can be applied to hypothesising identity. This standpoint is adopted by Cooley (1902), Mead (1934) and Goffman (1959). In the organisation studies domain, this theory is connected mainly with Tajfel and Turner (1979) and Ashforth and Mael (1989). As argued by Korte (2007, p.168) this view was established to deal with empirical inconsistencies concerning *‘the typical psychological concept of the self as a collection of personality traits primarily focused on the individual’*, where individuals establish themselves in groups (Fiol and Romanelli, 2012). As a result, scholars began to hypothesise the social characteristics of identity. As Epstein (1980)

emphasises, social identity theory postulates that individual identity is made up of both personal and social identity.

Adopting this perspective, personal identity embraces elements and physiognomies which continue comparatively unchanged over time (Ashforth, 2001; Ashcraft, 2013). On the other hand, Tajfel and Turner (1985) argue that social identity involves individuals assigning themselves to social groupings, which they rate in comparison to groups deemed to be less valued. This is achieved through categorisation (placing different groups of individuals into significant classifications), identification (assigning oneself to particular groups and dis-identifying with others), comparison (assigning oneself to different groups), and psychological distinctions (characterising oneself as separate from and superior to particular groups) (Ashforth *et al.*, 2008). This theory is frequently utilised in practice-oriented research, abstracting identity as ‘singular’ and constant, with clear-cut boundaries between ‘the self’ and ‘others’. Thus, applying this perspective to individual identity, researchers such as Dutton (2010) have tended to accept that social groups and connections and/or perceived resemblances with groups or firms are influential in identity construction (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Ashforth *et al.*, 2008).

Ashforth’s (2001) concept of identity theory differs from social identity theory in that the view of self is founded in an awareness of others. A person has several identities which are connected with the responsibilities that he/she holds in a community, some of which are more obvious than others. For Ashforth (2001), these compound identities are incorporated into a significant ‘self’ that continues to be fairly constant over time. As Dutton *et al.* (2010) point out, although self is comparatively unchanging, at the same time it is formed by numerous ‘situational

selves' which may alter from time to time. In summary, both social identity theory and identity theory perceive 'self-identity' as being comparatively unchanging, accentuating coherence, and thus continuity and individuality. There is an acknowledgment that social formations influence agential options; nonetheless, this occurs mostly through group participation, and the person is the main unit of examination in these methods (Ashforth *et al.*, 2008).

Although this theory affords importance to group inclusion, people are viewed as maintaining certain innate characteristics and traits (Alvesson, 2010). This leads to a somewhat static understanding of identification, and thus individual identity. Identity only alters when there is a noticeable change in group membership. As such, these inborn characteristics, together with socially developed qualities connected with group membership, have the predominant effect on identity development. In this theory, a number of role identities are viewed as being more noticeable, with which individuals identify themselves more (Huddy, 1998). However, this point is frequently unclear in the organisation studies scholarship. For instance, there is no explanation of how this process occurs, whether through upbringing, personality, or simply personal preference.

Social identity theory and identity theory advocate that people espouse roles at the workplace because they attach importance to them, so that they can develop their own self-esteem (Thompson and Smith, 2010). However, this perspective fails to explain why people take up roles, or even become members of groups, which they do not consider to be important (Huddy, 2001). It is debatable why people should be constantly driven to boost their self-confidence, because people constantly engage in responsibilities that they do not view as important or of which they disapprove.

Unlike social identity theory, which views identity as being somewhat unchanging, the majority of European scholarship concentrates on changeable and frequently disjointed descriptions of identity. As such, social identity theory provides little clarification of the ways in which objects and/or capital resources interrelate with identity (Huddy, 1998; 2001). This perspective pays great attention to social structures, meaning that material and/or capital resources are viewed as either insignificant or unimportant features which interact in the course of narrative manoeuvres. With this in mind, capital resources may perhaps be viewed simply as devices which can be employed and utilised in diverse ways by workers going through workplace transformation.

#### **2.4.2 *Identity as discourse***

Identity is increasingly viewed as subjectivity as a consequence of dialogue, and presumes a flowing and fragmented self (see Holloway, 1984; Weedon, 1987). Such research claims that individuals utilise dominant discourses to explain themselves. This means that identities are formed and constructed through discourse (Knights and Willmott, 1989). Pratt *et al.* (2006) argue that people have access to different discourses which influence their identity formation. Kuhn (2006) finds that identities are also manipulated by one's own self-narrative and the outlooks of pertinent others. According to Butler (1990), poststructuralists have questioned the notion that identity is essential to self. Their belief is that identity is merely a formation of discourse (Butler, 1990; Alvesson, 2010). From this perspective, individuals use their central discourses to define themselves (Weedon, 1987; Kondo, 1990). Thus, their central discourses are formed and controlled through the language of the discourse (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2011).

In grouping two separate discourse strands of identity, Alvesson (2010, p.207) makes use of the descriptions of 'surfers' and 'stencils'. 'Surfer' denotes that identity is fluid because of competing discourses (Thomas and Linstead, 2002). As for 'stencils', Alvesson (2010, p.206) writes, '*discourses produce subject positions not that different from roles which individuals are located in*'. This means that the 'stencil' description denotes that there is less agency, because main discourses form identity and there is no individual before discourse. The fundamental argument that Alvesson makes here is that present and local discourses precisely inform identity. This perspective views those discourses as having the most central effect on identity construction and transformation over time. This approach has been adopted by several scholars. For instance, Kondo's (1990) ethnographic examination of a Japanese family organisation concentrates on discourse identity, highlighting that identity cannot be unchanging. In contrast, she claims that identity is constructed, compound and filled with disagreements, and she shows that people appear to be formed in and during the course of social relations and obligations to others: 'Selves and society did not seem to be separate identities; rather the boundaries were blurred' (p.22).

As Dunn (1997) argues, individuals' notions of themselves and others' views of them are constructed by groups of socially-formed interactions. Potter and Wetherell (1987) claim that discourse identity scholarship questions and opposes several assumptions formulated by psychological scholars by presenting individual identity as being formed from social resources (Crane, 2012). Essentially, as Ainsworth and Hardy (2004, p.237) conclude, individual identity is not construed as a whole; rather, it is made up of small components.



The above analysis establishes that identity as discourse proposes that agents are shaped and structured as a result of main cultural discourses. As highlighted by Jermier *et al.* (1994), these discourses are viewed as shaping and forming subjectivity. In this light, this approach rejects the idea that people reflect actively on numerous resources to form their own self-identities (Blustein and Noumair, 1996; Marks and Thompson, 2010).

Alvesson and Willmott (2002) claim that people are not only dependent on discourses, but are capable of interpreting and performing them. With this in mind, while acknowledging the influence of discourses, they accept both the ability of people to interpret these discourses and select amongst them, and the role of life history in offering a framework within which the entire development occurs. They show how people interpret and perform discourses, proposing that other factors also play an important role. This ontological stance is challenging because it expounds the notion of ‘essentialism’, which most poststructuralist scholars in this discipline tend to disregard, although some scholars, such as Alvesson and Willmott (2002), do not avoid it.

Lastly, a further issue with this perspective is clear in its implications for organisations. As highlighted by Collinson (2003, p.542), supposing that identity is discursively constructed entails that organisations can advance and control identity during the course of ‘*power relations, discourse, surveillance and financial payments*’. Hence, this perspective of identity theoretically allows organisations important power over the identities of their workers, which has crucial ethical implications.

### 2.4.3 Identity as narrative

According to Carroll and Levy (2008, p.79), identity research has always been related to narrative. In this sense, identity is theorised as *'an ongoing process of meaning making that is best accessed by asking people to tell us about themselves as a story'*. Because personal accounts are used to simplify the difficult themes of identity theory, it appears appropriate to use them in identity research (Beech and Sims, 2007). In addition, unlike the other two approaches to identity, from this perspective personal narratives go beyond simply describing reality, because personal accounts simultaneously describe and shape identities. This means that personal narratives of one's experiences construct who one is and what happened (Beech and Sims, 2007). One's personal narratives of experiences are embedded in oneself and differ from those of everyone else. The narrative perspective assists in understanding organisation as a continuing social process of connecting self to other, self to organisation and self to self (Czamiawska, 1999). This perspective reveals the personal, emotion-laden and divisive storytelling which enables researchers to look beyond what could be perceived or deliberately voiced by participants (Gabriel, 2000). Therefore, narratives are an approach to revealing uncontrollable dimensions of organisations.

The history of narrative inquiry can be traced back to Ricoeur (1981; 1984; 1986; 1988), recognised notably for merging phenomenological methods with hermeneutic explanation and providing influential texts on narrative analysis. Ricoeur views narrative as fundamental to identity: *'Without recourse to narration, the problem of personal identity would in fact be condemned to an antimony with no solution'* (Ricoeur, 1988, p.246). For Ricoeur, the term 'identity' is understood in two ways.

Firstly, identity is comprehended as being fixed (as in the Latin word of similar origin, 'idem'), or rather lasting but changing. He also argues that people produce their own narrative identity, or what he also calls 'self-same' (Ricoeur, 1988, p.246). Gergen and Gergen (1988) emphasise that identity is negotiated amongst likely contradictory visions of self. Consequently, narrative is an approach of '*balancing the self that is constant and the self that is changing*', because individuals are capable of understanding themselves through the narratives they tell themselves (and others) about themselves.

As argued by Denzin (2000) and Holloway and Freshwater (2007), narrative is a way of forming, taking apart and re-forming ourselves and our identities. Alteration and rebuilding of identities is not necessarily undesirable, as the unpredictability of our narratives enables us to make sense of our experiences and to change our social identity when necessary (Mishler, 2006; Benwell and Stokoe, 2006). Copley (2001) supports this claim, arguing that narrative is fundamental to identity creation, and the ability to discover meaning from narratives offers a perception of '*order to the species*' that reinforces our existence (Bruner, 1990).

McAdams (1993) suggests that narrative identity construction is based on the notion that all individuals are aware of who they are by engaging in 'heroic' accounts of self, intentionally and unintentionally (Weick, 1995; Rasmussen, 1996). Building on this, McAdams (1993, p.12) states that, as with every story, the individual's 'myth' has a beginning, middle and end consistent with the plot and character. This links to Mead's (1863–1931) earlier work which suggests that a sense of self or identity is acquired through interactions in the world. He argues that we acquire this throughout our lives, and that as infants we are '*socialised*' to understand who we are and what

is expected behaviour in society. He uses examples of the socialisation of infants to gender-specific, expected roles, believing that a male infant will, as he grows, understand that he is a boy and that, as a boy, predetermined behaviours are expected of him (Kenny *et al.*, 2011). Through this socialisation process the child will grow to understand what is expected of him, learning that society expects him to play with cars and trains rather than dolls, and to behave in certain way and not cry. Mead refers to the process of socialisation through the creation of 'me' and 'I'. The 'I' interprets the world it senses, and the 'me' is described as how the 'I' chooses to present itself to the world.

As argued by Rhodes and Brown (2005), the narrative perspective has been widely utilised in the study of identity in a variety of ways that underline the formation, interaction and multiplicity of identity. According to Smith and Sparkes (2008), this starts with researchers who perceive identity as a mainly individualistic phenomenon and finishes with those who theorise it as contingent on the dynamics of social presentations. Rhodes and Brown (2005) also argue that the development of narrative methods is an indication of the 'linguistic turn' that takes place in the social sciences, including organisation studies (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000; Deetz, 2003). This approach has been adopted in different disciplines, including sociology (Somers, 1994; Ezzy, 1998), history (Carr, 1986), various branches of psychology (Sarbin, 1986; Rappaport, 2000), communication studies (Fisher, 1984; Cooren, 1999), folklore (Georges, 1969), anthropology (Levi-Strauss, 1963; Geertz, 1988) and philosophy (Ricoeur, 1983). Furthermore, Rhodes and Brown (2005) identify five main subjects of analysis where this approach is utilised within organisation

theories: sensemaking, communication, politics and power, learning/change and identity, and identification.

The narrative perspective encompasses the formation of a clear account, a ‘narrative identity’ (Ricoeur, 1991; 1994) of the manifold and frequently contradictory identities that an individual formulates over time (McAdams, 1996). Of course, as Ibarra and Barbulascu (2010, p.136) highlight, this perspective is deemed to be essential in professional and life transformations by allowing individuals to perceive continuity ‘*between who they have been and who they are becoming*’. In addition, Ibarra (1999) and Pratt *et al.* (2010) claim that people shape, change and adjust how they characterise themselves and others in the setting of work-based conditions and actions. Building on this claim, Mallett and Wapshott (2012) highlights that individuals’ work is always a representation to them. Different people describe their roles by using ‘*rhetorical narratives*’, including how they interact with other workers, feel that they are doing an important job, and so forth (Dutton *et al.*, 2010; Mallett and Wapshott, 2012). Ibarra and Petriglieri (2010) also argue that, from this perspective, identity is perceived as encompassing several meanings to ‘*oneself by self and others*’. The self-concept comprises manifold identities that differ according to their significance to the person (Mallett and Wapshott, 2012), and whether they offer real or possible attainment, as well as their ‘*temporal orientation*’ (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010). Ibarra and Petriglieri (2010) and Mallett and Wapshott (2012) argue that this is an area of research that remains relatively new and undeveloped, and that more research should build on this perspective.

Put simply, identity from this perspective is understood as a story with narrative arrangements normally established in stories, such as themes, plots and characters.

These stories are crucial as channels through which people identify themselves and as '*tools for taking actions*' (Michalinos, 2003). This is an important component in the current research, which focuses on how teachers perceive space and how they react to changes. Narrative analysis enables an examination of how teachers' 'storying of the self' is continuously being formed and how their experiences of their new environments affect and form their professional identity. Trinh (1992) argues that this method of studying identity is shifting away from long-established questions of *who* one is to new questions of *when*, *where*, and *how* one is. In other words, it enables an exploration of the inter-subjectivity of teachers' narratives about their professional role, which they achieve by reflecting back on personal experiences. Thus, adopting a narrative approach signals an investigation of teachers' occupational identity-construction by focusing on their interactions, their narratives of events and their self-presentation. This is achieved by emphasising the 'situatedness of self': if narratives are constructed in the course of communication, this takes place in response to conditions, practices and obtainable resources.

A robust and clear narrative may be particularly crucial for rationalising the formation of teachers' occupational identity. As argued by Gearing (1999), a narrative shows, or even re-establishes, continuity of identity, regardless of any noticeable disruption that an individual may previously have had. Thus, Linde (1993) explains that this enables individuals to demonstrate that transformations in the workplace do not fundamentally compromise their identity, and that discontinuity may at first be viewed as problematic. When there is a change in the workplace, an appropriate narrative becomes vital because people must change yet continue to be consistent (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). For example, a teacher

experiencing changes in the workplace must frequently switch to a well-known self-narrative. As such, teachers' narratives will develop into coherent stories in the course of the narrating and retelling (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger *et al.*, 2012). This process takes time, and it may require an individual to be more reflexive than usual.

According to Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010), identity is shaped and re-formed when change is effected by individuals amending their own narratives of self, and the narrative varieties that they talk about and refer back to, in forming descriptions or identity narratives. Change here refers both to an individual's career changes and to changes and transformations that an individual experiences in the workplace (Mallett and Wapshott, 2012). As touched on above, change can be achieved when stories change in a way that is clear and consistent with a new role identity. Mallett and Wapshott (2012) claim that narratives are altered in the course of identity play, where individuals experiment with potential future selves in the course of a change in order to restructure a clear identity. This is different from identity work because it is more focused and aims to acquire a clear self-identity. In other words, as soon as an individual's identity is undermined by a change, he/she engages in a discovery stage of taking into consideration new probable identity narratives. Once an identity narrative is designated, the individual engages in a production of identity work, which he/she composes as a clear account that withstands external examination (LaPointe, 2010).

Ibarra (1999) and Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) argue that the narrative perspective generally underlines the significance of agency and selection in forming a self-tailored identity, which may be intentional or unintentional. However, Sveningsson

and Alvesson (2003) suggest that people happen to be more aware of the identity work that they carry out in the course of changes at the workplace. Thus, this perspective rejects the significance of physical possessions, social assemblies and cultural discourses in the enhancement of self-identity. In this light, these possessions are simply instruments to assist in the generation of a clear account of difficulties, which produces a division between the actual and the ideal that must be overcome through ongoing identity work.

McAdams moves on to propose that setting is crucial, as it creates a place in which narratives are produced and ‘co-constructed’. In this light, this claim gives precedence to agency and story, meaning that it regards social arrangements as one feature of the setting of the narrative which is formed. That said, there has been little debate over what form these constructions may take, or how they may influence identity over time (Mallett and Wapshott, 2012). Scholars such as McAdams (1996) and Clarke *et al.* (2009) briefly propose the significance of setting when producing life narratives; they concentrate predominantly on the ‘local’ world of narratives, which restrains the agency of the storyteller. This implies that individuals are somewhat unrestricted and unconstrained in choosing how they form their identity. This approach tends to embrace the psychological perspective.

Clarke *et al.* (2009) suggest that there has been little research reflecting on the way that an individual acquires coherent narratives from potentially different and contradictory discourses. They specifically state:

*Much of this work has been predicated on the assumption that people satisfy their needs for self-esteem, self-knowledge, and self-continuity by authorising*



*self-narratives that are relatively coherent. Far less attention has been paid to the practical difficulties managers experience in assembling such narratives from available discourses, some of which may have divergent implications* (Clarke et al., 2009, p.324).

One area that is particularly overlooked is how individuals accumulate stories by concentrating on obtainable physical resources. The present research seeks to address this in greater detail, concentrating in particular on how teachers make sense of and give meaning to their daily experiences in their new organisational space. Studying identity from the narrative perspective enables this objective to be achieved, and is where this study contributes to the field of identity (Mallett and Wapshott, 2012).

To conclude this section, three main streams of identity have been discussed, showing how each perspective adopts a different epistemology and ontology in scrutinising identity. As illustrated above, there is no absolute definition of identity, and each perspective has its limitations and criticisms. As argued by Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) and Mallett and Wapshott (2012), narrative identity is an undeveloped area of research which requires further attention.

The next section turns to conceptualising the complexity of professional identity through Ibarra's (1999) concept of provisional selves and teachers' professional practice. Professional identity is briefly defined with specific reference to teachers' occupational identity.

## **2.5. Understanding the complexity of professional identity through the concept of provisional selves (Ibarra, 1999)**

In defining professional identity, Ibarra (1999, p.765) refers to the group of *'attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role'*. Developing this definition, Gibson *et al.* (2010, p.21) argue that current explanations of professional identity centre on three fundamental subjects: self-labelling as a 'professional', the combination of abilities and attitudes as a professional, and an awareness of background in a professional society. In referring back to the existing literature on formation identity we notice that the long-established clarifications of organisations is viewed as being a straightforward difference between those inside the organisation and those outside (Wright 2006). However, at the same time there has been an increasing mass of literature highlighting the complexity and multifaceted features of work identity (see Ibarra 1999). Reisetter *et al.* (2004) point out that professional identity is a viewpoint of self, in the same way that a professional, in addition to matters of capability as a professional, develops comparisons spanning individual worldview and professional outlook.

Gibson *et al.* (2010) highlight that professional identity is at the forefront of nationwide consciousness within the counselling profession, while Knowles (1992) claims that professional identity is an uncertain concept regarding the significance of what, and to what degree, effects are incorporated in such an identity (Beijaard *et al.*, 2004). Pratt *et al.* (2010, p.236) argue that, although substantial research has been undertaken on *'identity construction of organisational members'*, it is not clear whether such perceptions can be relocated in the 'identity of professionals'. As

indicated above, most studies of organisational identification, including Ashforth and Mael (1989), have examined the significance of 'organisational membership' in workers self-concepts (Pratt *et al.*, 2010, p.237). Nonetheless, it is not evident whether participation has an analogous function in the self-concepts of professionals (Gouldner, 1957; Wallace, 1995; Pratt *et al.*, 2010). Pratt *et al.* (2010, p.236) suggest that organisational membership indicates '*where you work*', whereas professionals are frequently defined by '*what they do*'. In recognising this gap in the literature, Pratt *et al.* (2010) focus on constructing and enriching theory on how professionals construct their own professional identity in a medical setting. Unlike previous research by Abbott (1988, 1991, 1998) and Larson (1977), for example, who focus on discovering how professions as an occupational group attain legitimacy, status and boundaries, Pratt *et al.* (2010) focus on individual actors, carrying out a six-year, longitudinal, predominantly qualitative research study following medical occupants during their entire residency programs.

In order to examine the formation of teachers' identity, as indicated previously, particular attention is paid to Ibarra's (1999) work, which helps make sense of and explore how space forms and transforms occupational identity. Ibarra's qualitative study of junior professionals (consultants and investment bankers) focuses on 'provisional selves' and on steering a change from a technical and managerial occupation to more customer advisory positions. She finds that, in their collaboration with customers, they must portray a dependable image before they can fully adopt an essential professional identity. The fundamental belief here is that professional identity is constructed over time, with diverse experiences and significant responses that enable individuals to understand their vital and continuing preferences, abilities

and morals. Hence, professional identity is more flexible and variable early on in one's career. Ibarra's research refers to identity as different from 'image' or 'persona', and utilises these terminologies interchangeably in discussing the impressions that individuals consider they put across to others. In this study, Ibarra argues that individuals portray personalities as potential personalities they would like others to assign to them. For instance, potential personalities are prearranged by individuals' professional positions, and include decisions, business insights, capability, vision and reliability. Some of these potentials may be distinct characteristics of their identities; others may be different from their self-conceptions; and others again may be developed with experience.

Ibarra argues that there has been inadequate research into how new identities develop. She explores the way in which people experiment with 'provisional selves' by examining a 'repertoire of possibilities' until experience discloses which best suits their current setting. In experimenting with provisional selves, Ibarra sheds light on three fundamental activities in the evolution of professionals to more senior positions:

1. Viewing 'role models' to recognise possible identities
2. Testing with provisional selves
3. Assessing experience alongside internal values and external responses.

In Ibarra's qualitative research on 39 mid-career managers, as well as professionals considering a key career transformation, she refers to the transformation of setting (e.g. organisation, industry and sector), content (duties at workplace) and personal judgment of conflict with a previously selected path. Ibarra uses the term 'working identity' to discuss the development of recognising and experimenting with

‘possible selves’ – a similar approach to that of Markus and Nurius (1986). She suggests that ‘working identity’ entails three interrelated, but diverse, identity ‘reconstruction mechanisms’ – learning by doing’ (p.3) – and she does this by forming links with individuals whom subjects emulate, and by forming (and re-forming) life narratives. Ibarra situates her research alongside current explanations of role changes to emphasise that small transformations in individuals’ work activities, professional connections and networks, and self-narratives accumulate over time to construct their main work role and identity alterations.

Although Ibarra’s work focuses on role transition amongst in-service professionals in business, it sheds light on the study of teachers’ occupational identity. This is because research on professional education suggests ways of observing, experimenting with and assessing provisional selves as a function of creating a new occupational identity. Furthermore, in the present research space is a vital influence on teachers in forming their occupational identity. This study explores how, if at all, formation of occupational identity is constructed by the interplay of spatial changes, symbolisms and aesthetics of the workplace. Accordingly, for this study, occupational identity is dynamic, fluid and an ongoing process of identity formation, which encompasses the roles held by an individual in an organisation, the spatial and interpersonal interactions. The argument here is that space is involved in the formation of occupational identity as a subliminal force to be reckoned with in matters of identity formation, and that spatial changes construct employees’ new narratives of occupational identity. This is because change may create insecurities and a sense of self-consciousness concerning work-related identities, and professionals must adapt to this.

Thus, the focus here is to explore whether experimentation with situational influences, provisional selves and provisional spaces influences teachers in terms of their possible and provisional selves. Fear of change is an important element to investigate here because it shapes what we do. Knowing is the result of doing and experimenting. Physical change in the workplace is not a straight path towards some predetermined identity, but a crooked journey through the possible selves we might become. Such change may lead teachers to question their professional role, why the changes were made, and what their professional roles are now in their institutions.

It is clear from Ibarra's research that 'provisional selves' are helpful in adapting to new roles. Hence, this study seeks to explore whether provisional spaces are temporary solutions to meeting expectations that come with new roles. Indeed, Esblach (2003) suggests that workplace artefacts are important in work identity. This study goes a step further and explores how provisional spaces are integrated to form teachers' occupational identity and how they create new power dynamics amongst different groups. Munro and Jordan (2013) highlight that workers must seek their own spaces, raising the question of whether teachers should seek their own personal spaces to protect their occupational identity, and how they see themselves within those systems of professionals – their interrelationship with managers, space utilisation and issues around power relations. If we refer back to Lefebvre's thinking of space, space offers a sense of continuity to employees. How, then, does the destabilisation of the perceived change impact employees? What are the new power relations caused by spatial changes?

An individual must apparently be able to examine underdeveloped, and even uncertain, identities in somewhat secure and protected surroundings. Two central

features, 'safe havens' and 'holding environments', create restrictions that exclude the world, and as a result enable individuals to be open to what will develop in the secure space. This indicates a number of side-projects, provisional duties and extra-curricular interests that individuals make use of to examine possible selves. Such experiments enable individuals to put off real world necessities for steadiness and rationality. Instead, they test underdeveloped, uncertain or contradictory identities in a protected working environment until they feel secure enough to adopt a developing identity openly and publicly, as strictly mirroring one's self. All these important aspects of space and how it forms occupational identity are missing from the current literature underpinning studies of the organisational domain. Therefore, this leads us to discuss the issues around ambivalence and ambiguity.

#### ***2.5.1. Issues of ambivalence and ambiguity***

As discussed previously, occupational identity is multifaceted. With narrative formation occurring on a continuous basis, organisations are becoming more erratic and unpredictable locations for managing identity work and this leads to the creation of different spaces (Petriglieri and Petriglieri, 2010). Due to the complexity of the phenomena we can expect ambivalence and ambiguity at the workplace.

Referring back in Schein (1971), we notice that individuals were viewed as facing a range of internal boundaries which construct their organisational identification. Van Maanen and Schein (1979, p 222) argue that '*movement along the inclusionary dimension is analogous to the entrance of a stranger to any group . . . to cross inclusionary boundaries means that one becomes an insider with all the rights and privileges that go with such a position*'. This suggests that although functional and

hierarchical boundaries line up with noticeable structures of an organisation's arrangement (i.e. expertise and rank) inclusionary boundaries are viewed as being intangible social and interpersonal practices that strengthen the way that individuals are acknowledged in the organisation. Other streams of literature, including Hernes (2004), highlight the way that individuals are characterised within an organisation and the way that that is acknowledged by others is formed by contradictory organisational boundaries. Organisational boundaries are used as a tool in the organisation that places restrictions on activities and behaviour, and as a foundation of difference and identity for individuals and groups, along with levels which individuals might pass with unpredictable scales of complexity. These include the physical boundaries (i.e. organisational structure) and social boundaries which mirror concerns of norms and social connection and psychological boundaries associated with thinking and beliefs.

Although ambivalent identities are perceived as both temporary and difficult territories which result in ambiguity and confusion (e.g. Merton 1976), other researchers, including Meyerson (2003), suggest such 'dual subjectivities' could deliver an optimistic foundation of creativity and change for such individuals. Therefore, this implies that organisational and other identities, including occupational identity, have unpredictable salience for individuals and may synchronise with each other rather than signifying alternative possibilities (Wright 2006).

From such analysis it is arguable that the formation of work identity does not relate merely to the individual's position in the organisation, functionality or hierarchical location in the organisation. It can also be viewed as the creation of individual



formation which is constructed in the course of collaboration with others on a contingent basis (Wright 2006). For example if we refer to Goffman's (1959) work it is arguable that individuals at the workplace participate in a form of identity work in order to make sense of their membership and position. This involves constant social collaborations in which individuals maintain a particular identity status which is merely attained as a result of allowing such claims by other organisational participants. In circumstances of professional or positional ambiguity, it is possible that such identity work encompasses attempts to uphold a clear organisational identity, simultaneously creating 'distinctiveness' in terms of who they are, what they do and what they aspire to.

The ambiguous description of occupational identity is predominantly articulated for roles such as that of teachers, whom researchers like Meyerson refer to as 'tempered radicals' and 'outsiders within'. This is because individuals could be very dedicated to, and identify themselves with, their organisation but at the same time they could be dedicated to motives and principles which are at odds with the ethos of the organisation. As such, operationally teachers are participants of the school but at the same time observers highlight the demand for teachers to act outside this hierarchy and accentuate their neutrality and individuality in teaching and dealing with students. Teachers working in one school have to cautiously handle and sustain their relationship with their students, colleagues and other stakeholders. Teachers thus must to be conscious of the complications of organisational politics, and skilled political participants in their own right (Buchanan and Badham 1999). As such they have to develop a robust relationship with students and use power in an informal way.

Equally, teachers have to keep away from the view of being very close to organisational in-groups. They do this by preventing themselves from being viewed by the head teachers as simply teachers delivering lessons, but rather as a ‘two-edged sword’ in the sense that they deliver lessons but are also recognised as having a dynamic power (i.e. the head teacher cannot tell teachers how to teach and how to approach lessons). It is arguable that teachers work in a very ambiguous working environment and they ought to recognise their institutional boundaries and this recognition is strengthened through their day-to-day interactions. In this way there is a contradiction between teachers’ expert role (i.e. expertise in their subject) and their outsider position (they can teach but cannot make decisions on what to teach and what goes on in the school). Even though it is enticing to view teachers as opposed, segregated and excluded from being part of the school, this does not highlight the possibility of creating and accomplishing a positive ambivalent identity which is grounded in both difference and inclusion. In this study we explore the way that teachers pursue the construction of such desired identity, the boundaries that reinforce it and the contests that they have to deal with. The question that arises here is how space contributes to this ambivalence.

Having discussed the way that Ibarra’s work can help us make sense of formation of occupational identity and the resulting ambivalence and ambiguity, the next section will be focusing exclusively on understanding teachers’ professional identity.

## **2.6 Studying teachers’ professional identity**

Just like other professions, teachers frequently demonstrate strong individual dedication to their profession, and teachers’ emotions direct the construction of their

identities (Nias, 1986; Zembylas, 2003). Hargreaves (2004, p.176) rightly points out that teaching in itself engages '*human nurturance, connectedness, warmth and love*', and teachers' personal views regarding their function in caring for students shapes a central element of their own identity. Abrahao (2002) claims that in education it is impossible to divide the personal from the professional self, especially in a career infused with morals and thoughts. This is, indeed, extremely challenging. Hence, the question '*who am I?*' helps workers to define themselves, which sooner or later affects how they react to professional and social demands.

Teachers' professional identity has been examined by researchers focusing on different aspects of the profession. Pratt *et al.* (2010) interestingly highlight that, although there is emergent attention to matters of identity in organisational studies, scholars have little knowledge of how identities are shaped by those who carry out some crucial organisational functions, including professionals (Ibarra, 1999). They argue that professional identities, including those of law, accounting and teaching, are only recognised when an 'organised group' acquires an esoteric grasp that has fiscal significance when related to complications confronted by individuals in society (Carr-Saunders and Wilson, 1933). As stressed by Larson (1977), given their distinctiveness and expertise, society affords professionals greater value and autonomy than non-professionals (Pratt *et al.*, 2010). Pratt *et al.* (2010) claim that professional identity construction potentially augments the significance of professionals in all types of firm and the importance of identity in how people perceive and enact their surroundings (Weick, 1995).

Apart from the importance of organisational membership in understanding teachers' occupational identity, research on teachers' narratives, including narratives of

teachers' own experiences, is viewed to be important (Carter, 1993; Connelly and Clandinin, 1987; 1999; Feuerverger, 1997; Clandinin and Connelly, 1995; 1998). According to Connelly and Clandinin (1987, p.134), narrative deals with precise, concrete experiences, and *'through the construction of personal philosophies, images and narrative unities, narrative method offers an interpretive reconstruction of parts of a person's life'*. Clandinin and Connelly (1998) suggest that narrative research has become a crucial means of comprehending teachers' occupational identity, because in this way the researcher has the opportunity to record how discursive settings deliver interpretations of teachers' occupational identity. In addition, researchers such as Bruner (1986; 1990), Rosenwald and Ochberg (1992) and McAdams (1993) propose that *'our lives are storied'*, and not only is there a narrative of the self, but that narrative itself is narratively formed (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000).

Moreover, for individuals to comprehend who they are, they need an awareness of how they developed, who they are, and where they are moving to (Antikainen *et al.*, 1996). Hargreaves (1998) and O'Connor (2008, p 118) argue that *'teaching and learning teaching is socially positioned'*, an exercise that is deeply rooted in emotional familiarity. As Zembylas (2003) states, emotions notify and 'define identity' in the process of becoming. Thus, examining professional identity involves understanding how emotions direct teachers' professional practices and judgments. To reinforce this claim, Zembylas (2003) states that 'reason' and 'emotion' are inter-reliant because peoples' ways of thinking depend on emotional selections. As indicated by O'Connor (2008), understanding how people deal with and react to professional positions in different school environments is essential for studying the

convoluted and dichotomous features of teachers' emotions. Professional identities are regarded as resources through which individual teachers cooperate and reflect on communally located positions of their role. As Mead (1934) and Blumer (1969) claim, individuals' emotions are communally constructed.

This leads to a view that professional identity encompasses professional socialisation and progress which, as Brott and Kajs (2001, p.2) suggest, *'is a social learning development that embraces the gaining of a particular understanding and ability that are essential in a professional position to afford the expansion of new values, attitudes and self-identity components'*. In other words, in this way people use their new understanding, beliefs and drives to form their professional identity (Abraham, 2002; Mpungose, 2010) and they situate their personal identities within the expectations of group members (Mpungose, 2010).

At the same time, since the mid-1990s research has engaged with perceptions of the *'socialization of beginning teachers'* (Volkmann and Anderson, 1998, p.294). For example, Carter and Doyle's (1995, pp.120–1) explanation of this perception is that:

*'It involves intense and extended conversations with teachers and is based on the premise that the act of teaching, teachers' experiences and the choices they make, and the process of learning to teach are deeply personal matters inexorably linked to one's identity, and, thus, one's life story.'*

Beijaard *et al.* (2004, p.108) argue that the notion of 'professional identity' is utilised in different ways in the sphere of teaching and teacher education. More interestingly, in a number of works, including those by Nias (1989) and Knowles (1992), the notion of 'professional identity' is correlated with teachers' imagery of 'self'. In

these studies it is argued that the notion of 'self' effectively shapes the techniques teachers employ to educate their students, and their views on educational alterations. On the other hand, research by Volkmann and Anderson (1998) highlights the importance of professional identity for teachers' roles, examining the connection with other conceptions akin to 'reflection' or 'self-evaluation' which are imperative for the improvement of professional identity (Goodson and Cole, 1994).

Walkington (2005) claims that teachers' identity is vital to their principles, ethics and practices that influence their actions inside and outside the classroom. As Gee (2000) highlights, professional identity may be measured as one of several elements of an individual's identity, alongside his/her professional position, such as that of teacher. Similarly, Geijsel and Meijers (2005) conclude that individuals' professional identity derives from their self-perception in society, in addition to their relationships with others and their constructions of their experience. In summary, as Beijgaard *et al.*, (2004) suggest, the concept of professional identity is viewed as people's 'narrativization' of their central identity as a teacher (Gee, 2000, p.3). There seems to be no research on once formed how identity is challenged by exogenous factors, such as space.

Having discussed teachers' professional identity, the next section reviews the literature on the relationship between space and identity. From the above review, it appears that there is a close relationship between space and the formation of self. However, as yet it is not clear how organisational space is conceived, perceived and narrated by employees, based on the symbolism of space, their imaged space and their interactions respectively. This will be explored in the next section.

## **2.7 The spatial dimension of professional identity**

Hernes *et al.* (2006) argue that spatial surroundings frequently feature in appraisals of organisations and organisational practices (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). This is supported by Gregson *et al.* (2002), Taylor and Spicer (2007) and Dale and Burrell (2008). The research to date, including that of Fahy *et al.* (2013), concerned with examining organisational spaces takes various perspectives, from examining the function of an organisation's head office, to the spatial design of buildings in enacting organisational significance to spectators 'near and far', to the distribution and use of space for interaction (Hancock and Spicer, 2011; Beyes and Michels, 2012). Among researchers who have examined such aspects are Berg and Kreiner (1990), Goodsell (1993), Yanow (1993), Kornberger and Clegg (2004) and van Marrewijk (2009). On the other hand, research by Goodsell (1988), Lefebvre (1991), Yanow (2006a) and Preoffitt *et al.* (2006) investigates a range of hypotheses regarding the significance of built spaces and the degree to which these significances are essential to a firm's identity. Other researchers (Binter, 1992; Gregson *et al.*, 2002; Felstead *et al.*, 2005; van Marrewijk, 2009) focus on spatial essentials that connect an organisation's brand and objectives.

O'Doherty (2008) states that analysis of architecture and space is common in the expansion of examinations and hypotheses for understanding the modern organisation (e.g. Gagliadi, 1990; Gherardi and Strati, 1990; Strati, 1995; Baldry *et al.*, 1997; 1998; Yanow, 1998; Cairns, 2002; Burrell and Dale, 2003; 2011; Fleming and Spicer, 2004; Carr and Hancock, 2006). As pointed out above, such studies offer a better understanding of the growth of research investigating 'culture' and 'symbolism' in the workplace. This shifts the focus to the managerial and

organisational properties of 'aesthetics', as seen in the research of Linstead (1994), Gagliardi (1996), Strati (1996; 1999), White (1996) and Carr and Hancock (2003). O'Doherty (2008) argues that aesthetics is a difficult and questionable territory; nonetheless, it is extensively established in the organisational literature, as shown by Strati (1999). Thus, there has been a great deal of research focusing on how symbolism and aesthetics shape employees' perceptions in the workplace, which implies that organisational space has something to do with forming an individual's sense of self.

In scrutinising the dualism of 'aesthetics/an-aesthetics', Dale and Burrell (2002) argue that architectural layout performs a vital function in structuring employees' manners and identity (Dale and Burrell, 2008; 2011; Dale, 2005; Hancock, 2009). Daskalaki *et al.* (2008, p.30) and van Marrewijk and Yanow (2010) highlight that physical setting plays a role in the 'creation of the self' (Gagliardi, 1996). They claim that individuals give special meanings to their working environment. Reinforcing this, Hancock (2009) emphasises that the physical building of a firm is intrinsically emotionally involved, with a direct influence on workforce identity. Doxtater (1990) underlines that organisational space, including physical surroundings, artefacts and spatial structures, ascribes identity. According to Strati (1999), aesthetics plays an important role in organisational existence as it involves forming a person's understanding of the organisation. More specifically, he argues that awareness is generated by insights of hearing, sight, touch, smell and taste, plus the capability for aesthetic judgment (Strati, 1999, p.2). He argues that there is an ability to gauge whether or not something is enjoyable, whether it is to one's taste, and whether it engages or leaves one indifferent. Gagliardi (1990) claims that the 'pathos'



stimulated in members of a firm by physical elements turns out to be part of the firm's communication process, whereby workers have others appreciate their enjoyment. In summary, analyses of organisational aesthetics engage with the means by which organisational actors and the researcher together comprehend organisational life (Strati, 1999; Hancock, 2006; Hancock and Spicer, 2011). Elaborating on this, varieties of understanding are exercised on a daily basis in a company, both by its employees and by the researcher examining it (Strati, 1999; Yanow, 2010).

Again, scholars such as Berg and Kreiner (1990) and Hatch (1990) find that physical buildings and spatial arrangements are representations of organisational identity, and an awareness of workers' familiarity with space delivers awareness of concerns of '*alienation and identity*' (Dale and Burrell, 2003; 2008, p.173). In analysing the relationship between symbols and identity, Hatch (2006) indicates that physical architecture has a symbolic and practical influence over workers' views and deeds in the workplace. This belief is strengthened by Humphreys and Brown (2002, p.439), underscoring that '*the identity-constitutive stories told about organisations also directly impinge on the social identities of their participants*'. Thus, workers draw on possessions and associations from the firm's setting to establish and maintain their individual identity (Gieryn, 2000). According to Whetten (2003), the stories shaped by the workforce in forming their identity encompass organisational identity. Fineman (2003) and van Marrewijk and Yanow (2010) show that employees' identity development is intermixed with a process in which they are influenced by a number of outside forces, disagree with others, and in turn draw inspiration from the identities of persons and groups surrounding them. Gieryn (2002) claims that this

match of practices is shaped by individuals' narration and personal understanding (Elsbach and Bhattacharya, 2001; Taylor and Spicer, 2007; Hancock and Spicer, 2011). Accordingly, Natter and Jones (1997, p.150) find that spatial growth is likewise a control on, and an establishment for, identity development and '*workers achieve and resist their systems of identification in and through space*'. This suggests that space has something to do with workers' identity, but there is a lack of direct research that explores this important dilemma. This study explores this important research gap in the organisation studies literature by exploring how space contributes to and challenges identity.

Interestingly, Burrell and Dale (2003, p.194) state that organisational space is considered as a lifelong practice, continuously reflected upon and shaped differently by the various inhabitants of an organisation. Connecting this with identity, as Agree (2000) and Hancock (2009) find, spatial arrangements are the foundations on which workers draw to build their identity. Similarly, Jacques (1996) claims that such spatial arrangements are employed as a resource to refuse to accept discussions of control. According to Cains (2002), the power and effects of the design, plus the utilisation of the building, are essential in establishing whether they are encouraging or controlling people. Daskalaki *et al.* (2008) suggest that, although a building may be constructed under supreme control, it is repeatedly reclaimed as a place of conflict by individuals who personalise the place of work (Elsbach and Bhattacharya, 2001; van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010). Employees personalise their workplace to mark their territorial boundaries to outsiders, signalling that a particular space belongs to them and they have control over it (Brown, 1987). This is an important area of research to make sense of how this works in a professional environment. Elsbach

(2003) shows that the physical surroundings of a workplace are in-built for the advancement and continuance of workplace identity. Research by Larsen and Schultz (1990) at the Danish Ministry of Domestic Affairs establishes that the dimensions of the workplace signify staff importance in the corporation and differentiate workers from their co-workers.

As indicated above, Taylor and Spicer (2007) and van Marrewijk and Yanow (2010) claim that changes in physical surroundings and use of space may threaten self-identity (Hancock, 2009; Hancock and Spicer, 2011). For example, the concept of hot-desking is deemed by the workforce to be a ‘depersonalisation of space’, as they have to utilise communal spaces and share desks (van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010; Burrell and Dale, 2008; Tyler and Cohen, 2010). Thus, as Elsbach (2003) and Elsbach and Bhattacharya (2001) claim, it is possible to hypothesise that a spatial setting generates a source of identity arrangement and a method for constructing individual and shared distinctiveness. From symbolic spaces, a worker recognises his/her constantly shifting subjectivity and competes with outside activities to boost identity by way of planned and theorised spaces (Zhang *et al.*, 2008; van Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010; Munro and Jordan, 2013).

This thesis sees work as an imperative foundation for identity establishment for two reasons. Firstly, work is (predominantly) valued by people and engenders loyalty and motivation (Dale and Burrell, 2008; 2011). Secondly, individuals develop and achieve many mutual interactions (Thompson and McHugh, 2002). Many scholars have investigated identity in unrelated organisational environments, in the public sector as well as in higher education institutions (Barry *et al.*, 2001). Thus, from this discussion one can argue that the existing literature reveals that there is a relationship

between organisational space and formation of identity. We have also shown that organisational space is used as a political tool in which the prefiguration of space is felt to be ‘top down’ imposition of power, but what is lacking here is that we are not clear how this works in the teaching profession. In the next section therefore we examine why we should focus on the teaching profession.

## **2.8 Why focusing on teachers?**

We discussed above that the research on identity has implicitly accepted the importance of space in shaping the way professionals work. Through Ibarra’s conceptualisation of professional identity we explore Shortt’s (2014) work. Shortt (2014) explores the utilisation and experience of liminal spaces in relation to central spaces within the power dynamic, specifically in a hairdressing context. She extends the concept of liminality and claims that, once spaces are formed by employees as essential and significant to their day-to-day lives, they become liminal spaces and develop into temporary ‘dwelling places’. Her findings suggest that there is a direct relationship between a change in the organisational space and an employee’s sense of self. This research explores this issue, because ‘hot-desking’ has been introduced into the new educational institutions, meaning that teachers do not have their own office and must share their teaching space with other colleagues. The questions explored here are what this change means for teachers’ collaboration, sense of self and continuity and, more importantly, how teachers reflect on their teaching practices and their professional role on such imposed changes.

The organisation studies literature, for example Brown and Humphreys (2006, p.232), considers organisations as signified through language, and their emphasis has

been on how employees shape the content of the corporation through their descriptions of it. This study explores the meanings that teachers give to their teaching environment as a workspace, and how that workspace features in their acts of imagination, because teachers' narratives of occupational identity are constructed through their experiences of space.

The academic literature on educational policy, such as that of Mahony *et al.* (2011), indicates that this major investment in education should have been appreciated, given the dilapidated state of schools' physical buildings throughout the country. This initiative has accomplished a complete transformation of the physical space of schools across the country. Cardellino *et al.* (2011) and Mahony *et al.* (2011) show that the old organisational structures conveyed a negative message to students and teachers alike, because they did not feel valued. Consequently, they argue that this investment was vital to improve the morale of both students and teachers, and ensure a safe, comfortable and pleasant environment which would improve human collaboration. This belief was also pursued by the Labour government at the time the BSF initiative was implemented. They believed that the new buildings would provide an open shared space in which teachers and students would work closely together, with increased flexibility, functionality, inspiration, adaptability, innovation, state-of-the-art technology, and an aesthetically pleasing environment in which to learn and teach (DfES, 2004; CABE, 2006; 2007). It appears that the educational policy takes a functionalist perspective and assumes that the change will have a predominantly positive effect in schools. Winterbottom and Wilkins (2009, p.63) examined the classroom conditions and arrangements of old buildings, including the lighting and décor in 90 classrooms in eleven secondary schools under

six local authorities, and found that they were not fit for purpose. For instance, they conclude that *'80% of classrooms are lit with 100 Hz fluorescent lighting that can cause headaches and impair visual performance ... lighting could not be adequately controlled due to classroom design and infrastructure'*.

The government claimed that the introduction of BSF was not just about building new buildings but aimed to provide an environment that would meet twenty-first-century educational demands (Mahony *et al.*, 2011). With this in mind, the DfES (2003, p.4) stated that *'[O]ur research, and the increasing number of case studies that are becoming available, show a clear link between capital investment and improvements in school standards'*, meaning that improving the physical design of the building creates greater motivation from both teachers and students. It appears that the BSF initiative was a policy catch-all, in that *'The Government's vision for BSF is that it should be a holistic programme to include all levels of educational achievement'* (PwC, 2007, p.51) which seems not to recognise that organisations are contested political arenas. However, the contradiction here is that PwC previously claimed that one of the aims of their assessment was to discover the underlying methods by which BSF investment influenced educational standards (p.ii).

The later work of PfS (2009, p 4) claims that BSF was meant to be a promoter and *'enabler for change, but is not itself the change'*. The key question here is whether this change was made to improve teachers' morale and sense of belonging in the organisation, or whether it was politically motivated. The government certainly appear to have believed that new buildings were needed to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century educational demands, but it is not clear what effect this change would have on the teaching profession. How can success be measured? How does this new

organisational space provide a sense of continuity for teachers? Does it mean that the government will have different expectations from teachers, or are they simply caring for teachers' wellbeing. Is this a political decision with the aim of controlling teachers' professionalism? Does this mean that the management team is describing a perceived space without experiencing it? And if this is so, are they exercising power over teachers? Such questions have not yet been explored in the academic debate in organisation studies, but the present research explores such taken-for-granted yet important factors in the formation of teachers' occupational identity. Such transformation might be a threat to teachers' occupational identity. The existing organisation studies literature suggests that there is a close relationship between organisational space and formation of sense of self, a view which appears to be shared by educational policy researchers. Since the government has invested billions of pounds in rebuilding schools, believing that this change would improve teachers' and students' sense of self, it is crucial to explore this important and problematic area further.

This study explores the way in which individuals come to form, transform and comprehend their sense of self and their sense of occupational identity through the transformational space and symbols they encounter in their workplace. Interestingly, teachers are particularly visible in the new organisational space because they have to perform in an open space, in contrast to the office-based professional groups which are more usually studied with regard to organisational space (see Dale, 2005; Warren, 2006; Halford, 2004). Teachers' profession requires them to work in a complex environment, and having a relaxed, flexible and comfortable workspace is vital. Their teaching spaces have continuous physical boundaries and are filled with

members of the public and their work colleagues. Their working environment is in constant flux, offering an opportunity to explore the significance of materiality in their identity formation and transformation process, especially where their personal space is taken away from them. This would mean that individuals will have different understandings and perceptions of the change in their work practices and its effect on their professional role. As argued by Ibarra (1999) such transition will trigger the formation and negation of a variety of provisional selves which might serve as a setting to observe ambivalence and ambiguity.

One may argue that the transformations in ways of working that have occurred may be viewed as a threat to the teaching profession. In understanding how teachers deal with this threat to their occupational identity, exploring power dynamics and forms of control and resistance will be important. If we view this from Lefebvre's perspective, we can notice a contradiction between the 'conceived space' of the government and the repercussions of that space as lived by individuals. Therefore, to make sense of this, particular attention is paid to Abbott's (1986; 1988; 1991) work on jurisdictional control in the workplace. Abbott's (1988) work on the system of professions provides some interesting conclusions and opens an important debate on the subject of jurisdiction. Abbott recognised that research on professions at that time was interested in explaining the dominant positions of a small number of professional groups in the '*social stratification system*'. He argues that the sociological research of professions includes analysis of diverse professional groups that seek unchallenged command of a specific domain of specialised work within a 'division of labour'. For professionals to secure and uphold control, they must prove that they hold specific and unique sophisticated knowledge (Sydney, 1992). This



knowledge then allows them exclusive control, which he refers to as 'professional jurisdiction'.

Abbott (1988; 1991) assumes that examination of the work activities of a particular profession is fundamental to understanding variations in professionalisation. Through Ibarra's conceptualisation of provisional selves, it can be concluded from Abbott's work that professionals are very protective of their profession, and in the present study it might be expected that in a new organisational space teachers will feel that they are losing their sense of control over the identity of their profession. They may feel that they are losing precious spaces that belong to them. In this context, it can be argued that teachers are professionals, defined by the fact that they must have specific training and education to teach pupils. Again, this is an area of academic research that has not previously been examined. This research aims to explore whether changes in territorial space threaten their identity and, if so, how they respond to that threat. The literature on organisational space (e.g. Baldry, 1999; Munro and Jordan, 2013) argues that organisational spaces have territorial boundaries that cause spatial conflicts in the workplace. Similarly, Wapshott and Mallett (2012) and Munro and Jordan (2013) argue that in workplaces where there are no clear physical boundaries employees undertake constant negotiation.

According to Ayoko and Hartel (2003), space has various significances for different cultures, and the personalisation of space is one way of conveying and protecting identity. Sommer (1974) refers to personalisation as the reorganisation, adjustment or planned design of space by inhabitants to signal their personal beliefs. Having the ability to personalise their workplace gives employees a certain level of independence to adjust or control their territory (Sundstrom, 1986; Konar and

Sundstrom, 1986). Altman and Chemers (1980) argue that personalisation of the workplace is a method of territorial control, and employees do this by inhabiting a space and responding adversely when there is a threat or actual harm to their territorial control.

Similarly, Sundstrom (1986) argues that territorial control is an indication of the autonomy and control that an organisation gives to its employees. For employees, their territorial space is important to protect their identity, and personal space is used to protect their professional autonomy. As Bond (1996) claims narratives of autonomy and the jurisdiction knowledge is a way that individuals form their professionalism. Altman (1975), Wells (2000) and Ayoko and Hartel (2003) suggest that personalised space and territoriality are used as privacy parameters by employees, because when personalised space is taken away from employees they feel that their personal space has been invaded, and may therefore react negatively because they are anxious about their professional role. In other words, territoriality is an approach used by employees to create a boundary between 'us' and 'them' and suggests the personalisation and differentiation of space (Altman and Chemers, 1980; Brown, 1987).

Territorial space is created for three reasons: to respond to the materialised or unspoken presence of others, to act in response to environmental appearances, and to fulfil emotional demands (Hochschild, 1983; Kreiner, Hoschild, 2002; Ayoko and Hartel, 2003). Review of the literature indicates that personalisation of the workspace is widely held to be an indication of employees expressing their identity, and territorial control indicates autonomy and control of their profession. However, the extant literature shows that this is a neglected area of research in organisation

studies, and no research has specifically explored this important phenomenon. People appear to be attached to space, but only become aware of the importance of space when it is taken away from them. Therefore, through Ibarra's concept of provisional selves, this raises the question of what happens when professionals are not allowed to personalise their workplace, whether a lack of personalised space affects their professional identity and, if so, what professionals do to overcome that identity threat; and whether they see such change as a loss of control and autonomy in their profession. These questions are addressed in this study, which examines a situation of a new organisational space which teachers must share with their colleagues, whilst not being allowed to personalise their classrooms. This thesis advances the discussion on the existing literature by exploring the teaching profession, which has been widely neglected in the organisation studies literature.

The argument presently adopted is that the way teachers' workplaces are conceived, perceived and lived is closely linked to the formation of teachers' occupational identity. For example, this might be a narrative construction of teachers' place of work as a professional area, in which spatial concepts such as focus and periphery not only signify the degree of members' involvement in pedagogical and/or administrative actions, but also offer places from which teachers' work identities are formulated. Therefore, this study explores how productions of space are interconnected with the narrations that individuals form, imagine, and interpret, through which they express their situationality in those places, including their positioned identities.

Equally, studying the formation of occupational identity through Ibarra's (1999) perspective, Evett's (2006) work is useful to explore. Evett (2006) argues that

occupational professionalism is based on the notion that within a particular professional group there is a mutual authority which incorporates trust between the manager and employee as well as employee and customers. Trust, in this instance, is based on an individual's capability to do his/her work, and also on expertise gained from education, training and licensing. The assumption behind this notion is that employees have autonomy in what they do and jurisdiction is also operationalised by them. The new organisational space has brought about new ways of teaching and interacting with colleagues, students and management teams, so it is interesting to explore how autonomy, control and trust are affected by the introduction of the new organisational space. Teachers are considered to be professionals because they have expert knowledge and society trusts them to educate their children (Brock *et al.*, 2014). It is not yet clear what messages the organisational space gives about trust to teachers and how this has affected their sense of self. This is another area which this research aims to explore.

Evans (2008) claims that professionalism is internally constructed and that it is constantly changing. In this article she shows that professionalism is not what it is but is rather what it is imagined to be. She argues that the study of professions and professionalism has changed over the years. There has been a change from studying what constitutes a profession to the broadening of professionalism, to other matters within the discipline, including matters around trust, values, ethics and control. She shows that there is limited research explaining what professionalism is in the educational context. In this work, however, she fails to explain the development by which the values progress with changes in professionalism, such as through spatial

changes at their workplace and the way that space redefines and reconstructs the concept of the professional.

Similarly, from the above review it can be argued that individuals address anomalies in identity by assigning descriptions that indicate the way they regard themselves or wish to be noticed by others. In monitoring their personal conduct and the collaboration of others, they acknowledge, discard or even renegotiate these public impressions to provide or alter their personal self-conceptions. This idea of identity negotiation is closely interconnected with academic discussions around the steadiness or flexibility of self-conceptions (Ibarra, 1999). This suggests that changes in organisational space create tension and threaten identity. This research does not try to solve these debates, but instead builds on the present understanding that implies that provisional spaces (changes in space) present prospects for renegotiating both personal and public opinions of the self. Individuals constantly ask the questions '*who am I?*' and '*how should I act?*' Thus, space may be a multi-way process (Angouri, 2012) in which identities are claimed, projected and negotiated in the dynamic ecology of the workplace setting.

To remind ourselves of the main issues discussed in this literature review, in this research it is argued that, amongst other factors, a teacher's occupational identity is constructed by the accumulation of selves available for use in redefining and forming work identity. It is suggested that there are idealised expectations of what it is to be a teacher. It might be argued that teachers' perceptions of self are constructed by their own personal, social and cultural experiences, and that teachers' occupational identity is formed through their relationships and interactions with work colleagues (Cooper and Olson, 1996), through being provided with personalised and private

space, being respected and valued for their profession by their management team, parents and students, through their approach and philosophy towards teaching (including being in a suitable environment to teach), and through their job satisfaction (including whether the new organisational space meets their needs, and is secure, harmonious, communal and pleasing). The current organisation studies literature neglects these phenomena and this study fills this gap.

This study explores how situational influences, which include planned spaces introduced by the government, affect teachers' morale, values and professional needs. It explores how a physical space change constructs teachers' occupational identity, and how, through experienced space in the workplace generated by planned spaces, teachers' occupational identity is constructed. For instance, it explores how personalisation of space maintains a sense of self as a teacher, and how change can be effected through experienced space.

Therefore, through Ibarra's perception of provisional selves and through Lefebvre's understanding of space this study examines how practised space forms teachers' provisional selves. For instance, it scrutinises how space forms a territorial boundary and gives meanings to occupational identity, and how practised spaces form and adapt teachers' occupational identity based on personal daily experiences and practices. It examines how occupational identity is contested, formed and resisted which inevitably paves the way to ambivalence and ambiguity through the negotiation of, and tension arising from, the utilisation of a new space in the workplace. It would be interesting to explore through Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space, how power dynamics came to influence teaching workforce, their practices and sense of identity. This focus on power dealings through the introduction of new

space also allows us to address the question of whether occupational identity is inherently socially constructed in relation to space, and how spatial changes construct new approaches to community gathering, create boundaries between professionals and colleagues, and form new ways of interacting with colleagues.

The literature review reveals that the narrative of professional identity is under-researched in organisation studies. As noted above, at both case study institutions there has been a complete physical transformation of the teaching environment, and teachers had to move to a new organisational space. Understanding identity through the narrative perspective provides an additional interpretive view that may reveal new possibilities for identity exploration and enable the development of insightful theory. Borrowing from Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space and Ibarra's conceptualisation of formation of identity, we gain a better understanding of how the transformation of space forms and re-forms teachers' occupational identity. Although professional identity has been researched predominantly in the sociological and educational fields, when it comes to organisation studies such research continues to be neglected (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010; Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012).

In the present study, a robust and comprehensive narrative may rationalise the formation of teachers' occupational identity, showing teachers that such behaviour does not fundamentally endanger their identity (Ibarra, 1999; Alvesson, 2010; Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012). As claimed by Ibarra (2006), a good narrative is critical to the formation of individuals' professional identity, as they want to be viewed as developing, whilst also remaining consistent. In dealing with inconsistency, individuals form narratives in which they draw on former identities or form promising upcoming identities to craft a sense of stability for themselves and

others (Ibarra, 1999; Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010; Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012). The potential for developing a multitude of provisional selves makes the study of formation of identity and resulting possible ambivalence and ambiguity a worthwhile exploration.

The literature reveals little about how people's construction of a narrative self relates to the spaces which people occupy. With respect to relationships between the working environment and individuals' views of self, it is not clear how narratives of space relate to teachers' professional identity narratives. The existing literature indicates a connection between organisational space and professional identity, but not how this relationship works. As argued by Taylor and Spicer (2007), Marrewijk and Yanow (2010) and Hancock and Spicer (2011), comparatively little consideration has been given to the links between '*spaces, feelings, attributes and acts outside of some of the work in organisational culture and symbolism*' (Taylor and Spicer 2007, p.93). Hence, as illustrated by Brown and Humphreys (2006), more research is necessary on how narratives of space shape professional identities. This research investigates this specific gap.

In order to be able to observe the emergence, negotiation and tension in identity formation, this study examines a situation in which teachers have experienced a complete transformation of their teaching environment, with a new building and new external and internal architectural layouts. Therefore, in terms of theoretical knowledge, the main contribution of the present research resides in the interplay between changes in space and formation of occupational identity, bringing together two streams of literature centred around Lefebvre's (1991) and Ibarra's (1999) work. As such, this thesis addresses the question: how is occupational identity mediated by



space? With this in mind this study explores how issues of space and buildings are reflected in the formation of occupational identity for teachers, focusing initially on exploring the narratives of policy makers and head teachers on space and teachers' occupational identity. This is followed by examination of how space and occupational identity are narrated in professional practice. This thesis therefore addresses the following questions:

- What are the tensions, interactions and oppositions between perceived, conceived and lived spaces? And what happens when new spatial arrangements have been conceived (and created) without taking into account perceived and lived spaces?
- How does space contribute to and challenge established occupational identities? If we perceive identity as being fluid, situational and provisional how does destabilised organisational spaces impact on occupational identities?
- If organisations are made from both social interactions and physical appearance, is there a link between these two in the construction of new power relations in organisations? In what way, if at all, are power relations conveyed by new architectural design?
- If the planned organisational space is organised in a way that represents new power relations in organisations how can we then make sense of such new relations if we do not study spatial formation and the purpose behind it? It could be the case that such changes are aimed at providing just positive effects but we might expect surprising things to happen and as such to what extent can the surprising things be labelled encouraging?

In exploring these questions, particular attention will be paid to the following narratives:

1. Narratives of imagining and realising ‘the future’ in the accounts of policy makers and head teachers
2. Narratives of pedagogy and work: how teachers’ professional work is anchored in space
3. Narratives of collegiality, distinction and ownership: how teachers’ practices and identity are anchored in space:
4. Narratives of control and resistance: how the managers ‘bought’ the national narrative and ‘sold’ the changes to the teachers; how teachers, in turn, experienced this ‘selling activity’ in terms of the ensuing power dynamics; and how such changes created ambivalences and ambiguities in the teachers’ responses to the changes in space.

## **2.9 Chapter Summary**

This literature review has critiqued how space has so far been appraised in the organisational domain. It has reviewed the progress of spatial studies in the organisational literature building on Lefebvre’s work and differentiated three schools of thought, namely the behavioural, experiential and social perspectives. It has then appraised the literature on identity, moving on to discussions of how professional identity has been approached in the literature predominantly analysing Ibarra’s work and scholars influenced by her studies. Three main streams in the identity literature have been discussed: social identity theory, discourse identity and narrative identity.

It has also presented an overview of the relationship between organisational space and identity. With regard to the literature on space and identity, and specifically teachers' occupational identity, it has been noted that research appraising the relationship between space and identity from the narrative perspective in organisation studies is severely lacking. The next chapter discusses the prevailing philosophical position along with the research methodology of this thesis.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology/ Research Design Chapter**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter describes the approach and methodology in this research study. This chapter starts by giving an overview of the philosophical position underpinning this research. This is done by giving an overview of the ontological and epistemological position of the study in a way that relates to underlying research questions. The chapter explains the research design adopted for this study and explains its justification. This chapter then discusses the research methodology of the study and gives an overview and justification of the chosen approach. The next part of this chapter focuses on the data collection approach where it explains how visual methods, semi-structured interviews, observation and documentary data were utilised. It then explains the data analysis approach undertaken in this study by explaining and showing my coding approach used in this study followed by its limitations that I need to be aware of.

### **3.2 Guiding assumptions**

In the literature review we discussed that there are different philosophical approaches underpinning studies of organisational space and occupational identity. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979, p 240), a theory is a collection of important opinions that explicates the ‘philosophies and assumption of the world and reality’ (ontology), the nature of knowledge (epistemology) and how the study must be integrated (methodology) (Burrell and Morgan 1979 b). In this study I am interested in the way in which the transition to a new building shapes teachers’ sense of occupational identity through these other sources of relationships, because the new

building has consequences for how colleagues deal with each other, how teachers deal with students, how teachers deal with managers, how managers deal with them. In order to explain the phenomenon you need to be able to understand it and you understand it by contextualising accounts in a particular social milieu. Therefore, to understand occupational identity, and in this case the relationship to space, you need to situate it. One good way of situating it is through some bridge to shift from the old school to the new school that makes the social come up and experience-able and discussable in that sort of way. In other words, I am taking identity in such a way that it is continually worked on, constructed, established through interplay between the sense of oneself and the immediate context, immediate with those things happening. I am treating social structural categories as things coming to being rather than fixed and predetermined.

In this study the 'space as meaning' perspective and narrative identity is utilised, and consequently, the relevant philosophical concept employed in this study is interpretivism. Interpretivism as a paradigm captures the subjective, constructive characteristics of occupational identity, which may be influenced significantly by a professional interpretation of the meaning of space and space utilisation. Burrell and Morgan (1979a), Bryman (2004) and Saunders *et al* (2007) argue that interpretivism emphasises '*the world as it is*' and its focus is on the subjective meaningfulness of social truth. Burrell and Morgan (1979a p 226–7) give the example of interpretivism as '*attempting to understand and explain the social world primarily from the point of view of the actors directly involved in the social process*'. This quote suggests that an interpretivism approach focuses on exploring and explaining the social world from a participant's perspective and how they experience it. Therefore, as Bryman and Bell

(2007) argue, the head teacher meanings of this philosophical approach are epistemological, comprehensions of distinct activities. Included in this is the understanding of the ways that individuals come to know and comprehend the world (Burrell and Morgan 1979a).

Burrell and Morgan (1979a, p 260) also state that shared truth is created through '*inter-subjectivity shared meanings*'. This approach is relevant for the present research because the ultimate aim is to achieve an in-depth comprehension of how teachers experience and gain consciousness of the tangible environment around them, and how, if at all, this forms their occupational identities. The formation of occupation identity in this study is discussed from narrative interpretations and therefore focus is awarded to how teachers experience their world through their personal experiences, and how they narrate their events. Hence, a significant goal is to better understand the situation and the subjective importance which actors give to that situation (Bryman 2004; Bryman and Bell 2011).

As indicated by Angen (2000, p 385) interpretive scholars accept that '*reality as we can know it*' is put together 'intra-subjectively' and 'inter-subjectively' through the significances and comprehending gathered from our 'social world'. She further claims that interpretation is the key element when it comes to understanding. Such claim, thus leads to the presumptions that all 'interpretations' are 'temporal' positioned and constantly exposed to reinterpretation that the truthfulness of an interpretation have to repeatedly be acknowledged in the course of incessant discussion and conversation (Kvale 1996). This is because individuals cannot split themselves from what they know, their interpretation is crucial for their comprehending of themselves, of others, and the world around them (Angen 2000).

Creswell (1998) emphasises that a scholar's ability is essential to all stages of the investigation development and honest reliability turns out to be the foundation of evaluating interpretive study.

This paradigm does not acknowledge the discussion on whether there is a basic underpinning that we can know or whether all our understandings are simply subjective. It lands itself in the phenomenological awareness meaning that we carry out our lives in an 'intersubjective' realm that we experience '*sensually and know linguistically from moment to moment and day to day*' (Angen 2000, p 385). Thus, in this study 'interpretivist philosophy' is used as an umbrella label that accommodates the phenomenological perspective. Gadamer (1994) highlights that researchers adopting interpretivism philosophy assume that '*we live as if the world exists*' separately from us. People merely recognise it and empathise with it through efforts to expressively interpret it; and those efforts at interpretation are, in turn, affected by our temporal and cultural setting. In other words, comprehension cannot be disconnected from setting. Moss (1994, p 7) claims that interpretive study is grounded on the aspiration for a profounder awareness of how individuals experience the lifeworld through, linguistic, local, and historical positions, and the 'intersubjective' actions of the people involved.

Interpretivism opposes the pre-existence of objective reality. Mead (1967) claims that if meaning is formed during societal interactions of persons and scholars attendance in the field cannot be 'write off as a petit annoyance' or interruption. However, it should be viewed as fundamentally included in the interpretation of awareness as the latter develop around the partnerships amongst the scholar and the participants (Fontana and Frey 2000). As argued by Sokolowski (1974) it is possible

that people can make a judgment unclearly and carelessly. They also might form their view more cautiously by concentrating on their mental procedure that they were experiencing when reaching the judgment, and in so doing, declaring themselves as accountable for what has been declared (Sokolowski 1974).

From this perspective we perceive the world as collectively put together (Klein and Myers 1999). Bryman (2004) expand on this point by stating that from the interpretive perspective people endeavour to comprehend reality by means of scrutinising significances, which individuals consign to these occurrences. Thus, researchers following such a research focus on the inductive research method as they are concerned with noticing and constructing shared patterns (Fitzgerald and Howcroft 1998; Walsham 1995; Klein and Myers 1999).

### **3.3 Research design**

The research gleaned for this study is sourced from two case studies. According to Campbell (1975), case studies are vital instruments for obtaining rich comprehensions about reality. Becker and Bryman (2004, p 256) reinforce this claim by signifying that case studies add to forming a theory by taking special case studies as illustrations which function '*through a specific theoretical framework*'. As claimed by Sartori (1970) and King *et al* (1994) case studies offer a comprehensive understanding of the environment and address the meaning of the setting. Therefore, case studies provide the implementation of important comparisons. Scharpf (2000, p 774) highlights that case studies helps researchers to establish the relation '*between policy responses and institutional*' constructions. This claim suggests that this research approach provides a certain degree of generalisation.



Yin, (1981, 1994, 2003) claims that a case study as a research approach, contrasting from the other methods of investigations, attempts to examine a contemporary conception in its real-life standpoint. These case studies focus in the examination of how and why organisational space forms teachers' occupational identity. Furthermore, Stake (1995, 2000) claim that a case study would be of 'intrinsic interest' ('the case in itself is of interest') or of 'instrumental interest' (offers insight into a topic of broader perceptions) (Baxter and Jack 2008, p 548–49). It could be argued that both schools scrutinised, hold elements of both. This is because in the recent years, both institutions have experienced a complete change in their physical appearance/environment.

It is arguable that these case studies are of intrinsic interest to the present research because of the fact that millions of pounds have been spent on these buildings with the specific aim to improve the teaching environment and working practices (Bryman and Bell 2007). These renovations have been recent enough that teachers will still have a clear memory of the old physical environment, yet would have become used to the new environment enough to have formed new narratives. To summarise, the physical environment in both institutions has recently changed and it would be interesting to examine teacher's narratives of those changes and how these spatial narratives relate to teacher's professional identity. As clearly indicated in my literature review, this remains an emerging exploration and it would be a perfect opportunity to realise the influence of organisational space on teachers' professional identity in both schools.

### **3.4 Methodology**

The research methodology is chosen to draw out teachers' account on a new organisational space and how these spatial accounts relate to their occupational identity. As the research at hand requires gleaning a thorough and rich understanding, a researcher can observe activities as they are undertaken (Godo 2008). Therefore, embracing the interpretive methodology allows me to acquire an 'in-depth' and clear understanding of how the changes in the organisational space forms teachers' occupational identities (Gobo 2008). The need to discover instrumental accounts behind observable phenomena render the appropriate methodological choice being that of a qualitative method.

Qualitative research enables an awareness of the perceptions and collaborations of diverse participants meaning that it is an appropriate method of the research objectives of the present study (Flick 2009). Supporting this claim, Patton (1990, p 282) emphasises that qualitative interviewing enables the interviewer to '*learn members terminology, judgments, capture the complexities of his/her individual perceptions and experiences*'. Thus, the qualitative approach offers me as a researcher the opportunity to articulate the meaning of how teachers' experience the new surroundings by focusing on the use of language and their behaviour at work (Robson 2002; Dey 1993; Bryman and Bell 2007).

As Hatch (2002) and Bryman and Bell (2007) point out, the flexibility of qualitative methods permit researchers to collect answers that are unique to members and collect rich explanatory data. It provides information on teachers' views of the contradictory behaviours, interpretations, views, emotional states and interactions that prevail amongst teachers (Dey 1993 p 28, Bryman and Bell 2011). The approach was particularly useful because it enabled an understanding of how structural changes

being driven by the BSF programme were impacting on the day-to-day practices. In this way it provided the opportunity to explore challenges and supports of occupational identity. To conclude, qualitative data is advantageous for accumulating comprehensive data about beliefs, behaviours, thoughts and communal perceptions of teachers at both institutions (Silverman 1993; Robson 2002; Hatch 2002).

Furthermore, qualitative research investigates social phenomena in an in-depth way within their natural environments and may take many different forms. It involves analysing how people do things as well as how they construct meaning in everyday life (Bryman 2004). This approach has the ability to capture the rich tapestry of social life in all its complexity. It places more emphasis on words and is guided from the inductive approach (Bryman and Bell 2007). It involves a more naturalistic approach where social life is studied within its naturalistic setting. It focuses on uncovering meanings, how individuals make sense of reality and the assumptions that guide their behaviour (Denzin and Lincoln 2004; Denzin *et al.*, 2005). In this study interest is awarded to discovering teachers' interpretations of daily events and how they make sense of the physical changes that have happened in their workplace. Mason (2002) points out that qualitative research can uncover often the hidden processes that underpin everyday life. It further allows a more holistic understanding of the ways in which meanings may interconnect (Mason 2002). In the present research the main focus is on the way that teachers make sense of the new organisational space and how they talk about these changes. This approach allows me to explore the lived experience of a teacher's day-to-day work, which further

enables one to gain an understanding of how teachers participate in the construction of reality; in this case how they identify with the organisation they work for.

Flick (2009) identifies three key features of qualitative research. Firstly, such research demands choosing the most appropriate method for answering a particular research question. The second feature concerns the research being able to bring the research participants' experiences to the forefront so that their particular voices can be heard. The third emphasis is placed on the research accurately reflecting their role in the research process. In this research a field diary was kept documenting feelings and responses in relation to the research undertaken. This was used as additional data in its own right. Qualitative research is often associated with the idea that life is socially constructed, such as how people create their own reality through meanings (Bryman and Bell 2007). By exploring teachers' individual experiences it was possible to obtain multiple narratives on how their occupational identity is affected by the physical changes in their organisation. In the present research, documentary data was gathered, coupled with semi-structured interviews, which includes visual data (namely photographs) used as a prompt during the semi-structured interviews.

Having established the fallibility of an objective comprehension of truth, the recognised validity conditions for traditional qualitative study is likewise endangered. To overcome this issue, researchers are urged to position themselves a separate from what they witness, stop themselves from becoming emotionally engaged with the theme, and evaluate detachedly and inform of their results in a scientific, analytical manner (Bryman and Bell 2011). As pointed out by Hammersley and Adkinson (1995) a group of objective processes can be depended on to assess of the research study, including how to approach the field, how to

investigate data, when to depart, and so forth. As argued by Smith and Deemer (2000), scholars in the twenty-first century proclaiming neither the pre-existence of comprehension nor the theory-free clarifications of such acquaintance cannot operate these measures. In absence of these measure their positions emptiness (Schwandt 1996) and exposes check-list that necessities to be completed in by new empirical research relating to qualitative study validity (Smith and Deemer 2000). Providentially, qualitative studies have, at present, commenced to re-write the check-list. In this way, two approaches can be acknowledged.

The first method encompasses an 'inward turn'. Researchers, including Hardy and Clegg (1997), Alvesson (2003) and Alvesson *et al* (2008) emphasise self-reflexivity for qualitative studies. Concentrating on reflexivity, in its general perception it includes a form of self-critique, the 'unsettling' of the 'taken-for-granted' and the re-evaluating of the studying self in positions of his/her position in the production of knowledge (Pollner 1991, p 370). Likewise, as specified by Cunliffe (2003), it entails scholars to query their own hypothetical presuppositions, to scrutinise their individual backgrounds of ethnicity and gender, to explain the likely significances of their attendance and doings in the course of enquiry, and at the same time to hold back from outlining organisational representativeness as a stagnant existence.

There are numerous useful means proposed for following reflexivity in organisational scholarships. Hardy and Clegg (1997) propose that scholars have to intercede on the various tasks that they engage in the study and in this way they would view things from different standpoints. Alvesson (2003) suggests that when feasible it is worthwhile to resort to a mixture of qualitative practices while gathering/generating empirical data so that characteristics of organisational

representativeness, while covered by one technique (e.g. interview), can be improved by another (e.g. observation). Brady (2000) also emphasises that scholars are advised to think through exercising 'poetic' linguistic in the 'recordings and presentation' of scholar conclusions, as poetic linguistic unlock areas for manifold interpretations. In this way, it renders research texts a 'moral' tool through which readers could be stimulated into their own thoughts of societal realisms, and maybe into activities (Denzin 1997).

The second method incorporates an 'outward' turn. Hammersley (1998) claims that in substituting the representation of the lone [detached observer], scholars of qualitative methodology propose for a 'community-oriented', energetically embraced participant. Equally, as highlighted by Adler and Adler (1994), scholars are advised to establish participation functions in institutions during their observation. At the same time they are advised to be benevolent with participants, pay attention with tolerance the latter's life narratives (Gerson and Horowitz 2002), deliberately and carefully keep one's mind on interview progression, purposely eliciting answers by specifying, even proposing narrative views, 'resources, orientations and precedents' (Holstein and Gubrium 2002). In this way, researchers immerse themselves into daily activities of their chosen institutions, and in doing so acquire a closer 'textuality' of events. This does not constitute what has been spoken or performed, but likewise how, when, and where - and this is a 'textuality' that archives their positions in the construction of knowledge.

As established in the above analysis, one can conclude that the 'inward' and 'outward' methods are interconnected. Active involvements in the field delivers 'reflexivity' with fruitful empirical 'textualities' and in spite of that over-reliance on

each can produce inconsistencies in between. In illustrating such contradictions, Alvesson *et al* (2008) alerts researchers that ‘over-sympathy’ with offering participants different ‘voices’ could end up in an ‘un-reflexive’ judgment. This claim is reinforced by Weick (2002, p 898) who establish that ‘in the name of reflexivity, many of us tend to be more interested in our own practices than in those of anybody else’. In the ensuing two case studies narrative research is used, whereby as a researcher semi-structured interviews are embarked on where visual data is used as a prompt during interviews, and in this instance, photographs taken by teachers, along with non-participant observation and documentary data.

### **3.5 Narrative research**

This section introduces narrative theory; specifically how this has historically developed in the research sciences throughout the years. This section supports the use of narrative approach in the present research methodology for the reasons given below. Despite the fact that narrative is essential to person’s interaction, this subdivision portrays its enlargement as an enquiry technique.

Relatively early on in the research it became apparent that teachers assembled their accounts along chronological axes and in some ways it was obvious that they should do that given they have moved schools. Schools provided a very firm marker by which they told the story of then and now. As we all know when we look back in the past, the past is a fluid domain against which you can show a sense of who you are. As you get older that sense of past becomes plural which you can invoke in all sorts of ways. Narratives started to make sense based on the kind of data I was getting in this sort of setting.

Narrative analysis presents us with the tool to look at the micro processes of the impact of change in institutions, thereby offering a different insight into how new government policy has been implemented and interpreted by government and teachers alike (Llewellyn 2001). This perspective is grounded in the notion that humans are storytellers who through narrative make sense of their world and enact it. This means that change at both institutions is constructed through the stories told by organisational members. As argued by Demers (2007) these stories tell us what has changed, when and how change occurred and the intent of the main character. As such, narrative analyses show that structures only exist through the stories and narratives of organisational actors and as our narratives change so do structures (Tenkasi and Boland 1993, Llewellyn 2001).

Reissner (2008) highlights that the key assumptions of this perspective resides in the human need for meaning; humans seek out meaning by exchanging and collecting stories. She defines a story as a '*fragmented account of personal experience*' and a narrative as '*a more mature account that subsumes an infinite number of stories within a collective frame of meaning*' (Reissner 2008, p 23). It is this definition that is applied in this thesis, which focuses on two key elements of narrative analysis: firstly, by looking at how written government policies and managers narratives create the impetus to use storytelling as a political tool through discursive closure (Leonardi and Jackson 2004); secondly, how government and managers alike use narratives as a strategic tool in the face of a changing physical environment initiative around a master narrative of the old building experience, a shared concern for teachers, to legitimate change (Currie and Brown 2003; Llewellyn 2001). From this,



interest is awarded to looking at how teacher's narratives change because of the new building and how they make sense of it.

Researchers on teachers' narratives including narratives of teachers' own experiences is viewed to be important to the study of teachers' occupational identity (Carter 1993; Connelly and Clandinin 1987, 1999; Feuerverger 1997; Clandinin and Connelly 1995, 1998). Furthermore, through the construction of personal philosophies, images and narratives unities, the narrative method offers an interpretive reconstruction of parts of a person's life'. In elaborating in this claim as Clandinin and Connelly (1998) emphasise, narrative research has become a crucial means in comprehending teachers' occupational identity. This is because in this way the researcher has the opportunity to keep a record of the way discursive settings deliver the interpretation of teacher identity. Additionally, researchers including Bruner (1986, 1990), Rosenwald and Ochberg (1992) and McAdams (1993) advocate that 'our lives are. These stories are crucial for channels through which people identify themselves together with 'tools for taking actions' (Michalinos 2003). This is an important component in the present research as focus is awarded to how teachers perceive space and how they react towards changes.

Through narrative analysis I am able to examine how teachers' 'storying of the self' is continuously being formed and how their experience of their new environment forms their occupational identity. As Holstein and Gubrium (2000, p 104) indicate, 'considering the self in terms of narrative practice allows us to analyse the relation between the *'hows'* and *'whats'* of storytelling; analysis centers on storytellers engaged in the work of constructing identities and on the circumstances of narration, respectively'. This coheres with Trinh (1992) work which argues that this method of

studying identity is shifting away from long-established questions of who one is to new questions of when, where, and how one is. Thus, by adopting the narrative it enables me to investigate teachers' occupational identity construction as 'articulated through talk, social interaction and self-presentation' respectively. This is achieved by emphasising the 'situatedness of self'; if narratives are constructed in the course of communication, this takes place in reply to conditions, practices, and obtainable resources.

In this study I argue that the research is seen as a combination of a personal (researcher's) lens and this includes what is experienced during one's research in both institutions and the narratives of the participants (Gabriel 2004). In other words, this research merely concentrates on the interpretation and reinterpretation in the light of new experience and this is accomplished with both personal experience and listening/analysing the narratives of the participants. However, individual's narratives are embedded with the past experiences and cannot separate personal lives from our professional lives. As Denshire and Ryan (2001, p 150) remind, '*both of us believe that it is impossible to separate our personal lives from our professional lives*'. Chase (2005) argues that in narrative research a researcher views himself/herself as a narrator of his/her research, meaning that in this study one somehow sees oneself as conducting a personal narrative that is derived from one's field work notes constructed in the course of the study.

### **3.6 Visual data in interpretive studies**

For the purpose of this study semi-structured interviews coupled with prompt visual data were used. Visual methodologies derive from disciplines like cultural studies,

social anthropology, geography, and sociology (Knowles and Sweetman 2004). It seeks to find explanations of the social world beyond language (Holliday 2000). It attempts to capture 'life as lived' by including informant's accounts accompanied by various shots of ongoing events (Pink 2007). As Pink (2001, p 10) argues 'visual methodologies' though controversial, encourage respondents to '*tell their stories in ways that they have literally framed*' (Prosser 1998). This methodology has been utilised for over a decade in organisation studies. For instance, Warren's (2002) research focuses on the role of photography in exploring the aesthetics of processes of organising. In this research links are drawn between the contemporary consumer culture and aesthetics in the organisational and work context. It attempts to bring to attention the role of aesthetics in work organisations by examining it in a 'non-rational' way.

In this research the author's experiences during an ethnographic study of the website design department of a global IT firm are used to show that photographs taken by workers of their work environment helped them to express the relationship they had with surrounding aesthetics. Photographs were thus used by the respondents to communicate their aesthetic experience during semi-structured interviews. The images were an 'aesthetic lens' through which the author looked at his research questions and also used them as a basis for discussion. The author spent three months with a website design department of an IT firm located in the South of England. The members of the office had recently moved to an 'aesthetically designed' office intended to convey the creative spirit of staff to customers, and to provide a creative environment. This particular department was chosen because the

author saw it as an opportunity to explore the relationship between consumption, aesthetics, and organisation.

The key questions for the employees were how did they feel working in the new working environment (and did it appeal to them) and was their attachment to the organisation changed. During the first stage, she engaged in many conversations with staff during which they showed her the places, objects and spaces they were talking about. When she was asked to see all that, she decided to start using photographs. First she took the photos herself but because of her own view being reflected in the photos, she decided to hand the camera over to the respondents. The respondents were thus given the instructions to take photos of things that they felt represented their work environment. The photographs were later viewed and discussed in an interview discussion between the respondent and the author.

In this study, Warren recognises the limitations of text-based research and its efficacy and thus applied a more 'sensually complete' methodology. She argues that this approach is more comprehensive than the traditional, narrow focus on the spoken and written aspects of organisation. She also says that the more senses that are included, the better the data. The photographs served as a focus for discussion, as well as adding to the verbal data collected. It also gave the respondents a chance to feel more in control of the interview, thus facilitating the discussion and making it more open.

However, I identify ethics as one of the main issues in this type of study. The issues of anonymity and privacy become more pronounced when taking photos as opposed to taking notes. Permission needs to be asked and granted before taking a photo of

someone. I promised not to use any photos from which the organisation or the people working there could be identified. Another difficulty faced was that of storing photos and sending large amounts of data. Also the printing is made more difficult by the sheer amount of data.

More recently, Shortt and Warren (2012) explored how ‘respondent-led’ photography engenders data that enhances comprehension of organisational members’ identities at work. This research took place during 2008 and concentrated on hairdressers. Their aim in this methodological article was to explore the effectiveness of the visual, in particular respondent-made photographs – in the narratives these hairdressers shaped about their working identities. Thus, their intention was not to completely theorise these data in relation to literatures on materiality, space and identity in organisational contexts. In their justification of utilising this methodology, they emphasise that ‘textual narratives’ have extensively been related with identity study for reasons of their capability to produce ‘intersubjective stories’ that encapsulate somewhat of the ‘messy nature of multiple self-hood(s)’ and the most lasting ostensibly unchanging characteristics of individual’s self-identity (Carroll and Levy 2008).

Shortt and Warren (2012, p 18), however, suggest that narrative research methodologies that merely depend on spoken/written text could be insufficient to comprehend the *‘performative character of human relationship with the objects and spaces they move through’*. They agree with the fact that stories are certainly complete with reminiscent imagery and are ‘image-inative’ message, and regardless of differences of storytelling, such as fairy tales, presenting rich prospects for metaphorical visualisation (Coupland 2008), they propose that closer responsiveness

to visible and tangible scopes of the spatial-material world is required in narrative exploration in order to centre '*directly on the agency of space and things in generating identities at work*'.

In terms of the research strategy, this research was achieved through five hairdressing salons in the UK. In this way the researchers had a variety of spatial layouts and designs and different sizes across the UK. In their research, 43 hairdressers were sampled in all five salons and they took part in the respondent-led photographic task and subsequent photo-interviews. In this study respondents were 'purposively sampled' and this was due to the large numbers of hairdressers, a similar technique suggested by Blaxter *et al.*, (1996). Their participants were based on extending a variety of hairdressers who represented a variation of experience, role within the salon, gender and age. In this study, researchers gave a disposable camera to each of the hairdresser who was selected to participate as were brief guidelines specifying what the key research interest were, and what was essential in terms of the photographic task. In this project, the participants were asked to take photographs of objects and spaces that were 'meaningful' to them and that said something about their personalities at work. In giving instructions on what to do, it was suggested that they may wish to take six images of objects or spaces that they liked, and up to six they disliked. In this study, participants chose to take more photographs than stated, and frequently used the majority of the roll of the film within the disposable cameras.

They highlight that in this research hairdressers were excited and enthusiastic at being asked to participate and take photos. Participant responses involved pleasure at being asked to take photographs, feeling special and encompassed, and excited

participants as to what they might take photographs of. This reaction demonstrates and mirrors how ‘under-researched’ this work setting and its employees are. There appeared to be an aspect of commotion that a world outside their own industry was interested and cared about what they thought.

In this research, participants had three days to conclude the photographic task before the cameras were collected and taken to be developed. This, they argue, permitted an appropriate time to think what objects and spaces they may take pictures of, and reflect on their own experiences of the spaces and objects about them. They gave this short time to complete this task because they believed that by giving any extra time they may lose their cameras or simply forget to complete the task.

The ‘respondent-led photographic’ study process was conducted over approximately nine months where the researcher was present in the salon which enabled the task to be kept clear in the minds of the participants and she was able to field questions with regards to the task. In this research, 45 participants returned their disposable cameras, and around four weeks later, each of these respondents were asked to a ‘one-to-one, face-to-face photo-interview’ where the images each respondent had taken were discussed and explored in a collaborative manner. The length of the interviews was between 45 minutes to an hour and each recorded onto a digital Dictaphone and later transcribed. Interviews were semi-structured and each respondent was requested to commence the interview in the same way, and similar, ‘generic’ questions were frequently asked in order to inspire additional narrative. This technique enabled the researcher to have some organisation to be upheld within the interviews, without being too rigid and possibly missing key prospects to follow vague discussions with respondents.

On a par with Shortt and Warren's (2012) research methodology, for the present study after a month of being at the institutions teachers were supplied with a disposal camera. In this study teachers were asked to take five to six photographs of objects and spaces that gave special meaning to them and said something about their occupational identity. In doing so, teachers were suggested to take six pictures of objects that they gave special meaning to and up to six images that they disliked. In other words, teachers were asked to take pictures of what seemed to be important for them and their profession. Thus, during this time teachers had the opportunity to take pictures of objects/spaces that they deemed to be significant for their profession. The disposable cameras to them for approximately 1 month and then I took them back and developed accordingly. I developed the photos and placed them in the semi-structured interviews. The semi-structure interviews were organised at the last month of my research where they lasted for 45 minutes to 1 hour. An identical approach used at the North College (NC).

For the present research across 45 respondents 1125 photos were accumulated. On average, each respondent took on average 25 photos. To gather data, the photos were laid out on the table available to view as a prompt during the semi-structured interviews. Here teachers had an opportunity to reflect on the pictures. Photographs were randomly placed where teachers could see them. I started the semi-structured interviews and teachers referred to photographs to open a discussion and remind themselves of what changes in the workplace have affected them and their occupational identity. They did not use all of the pictures. Teachers during the interview used pictures to remind themselves of important spaces. They used pictures more than just a prompt because it opened a discussion. It worked as a



reminder of their important spaces. For some teachers, pictures were a reflection of what they do on day-to-day practices, whereas for others they worked as a starting point of their discussion (Shortt 2014). Of course, discussing pictures that were taken a few months ago have their implications. Teachers had to reflect back and state why they took a particular picture.

In this research, I used pictures just as a prompt for teachers to reflect on their personal experiences and open discussions. It was important not force teachers to reflect on the pictures that they took which they did not remember for why they took a particular picture. It was more like a reminder for them. This approach is preferred because it supports the ontological and epistemological basis of this study. This is because the present study is concerned with the participant's subjectivity and individual experience of teaching places. This approach foregrounded teachers' opinion and assisted them to communicate their experiences (Warren 2005; Shortt 2014), and formed more control dynamic between teachers and the researcher (Ray and Smith 2012). This method gave the opportunity to teachers to look at the often unnoticeable elements of the organisational world (for example identity) and did not rely just on written narratives (Warren 2005; Shortt 2014). For instance, in this study, one teacher during an interview referred to one picture when discussing isolation and hidden places. The picture in question reminded the teacher to discuss frustrations as to the lack of space.

While I recognise that the work of Shortt and Warren (2012) provides a foundation upon which to build, it is necessary to reflect on my own critique of their research, as well as the differences in terms of context in the design of new empirical work. In this study, I gave a disposable camera to each teacher who was selected to

participate, as well as brief guidelines specifying what the key research interests were, and what was essential in terms of the photographic task. In this project, the participants were asked to take photographs of objects and spaces that were ‘meaningful’ to them and that said something about their personalities at work. In giving instructions on what to do, it was left to the participant’s discretion as to how many photographs to take. The purpose of doing so was to explore how ‘respondent-led’ photography engenders data that enhances our comprehending of organisational members’ identities at work. The use of camera in this instance assists in giving a sense of what teachers thought about space, how they see it, what they think is important, and how space is moulded in their professional identity. It allowed one to track teachers’ perception of space. Thus, the ability of visual methods to incite teachers to engage their own imagination and the occupational identity makes this method attractive.

In my justification of utilising this methodology, I argue that ‘textual narratives’ have extensively been related with identity study because of their capability to produce ‘intersubjective stories’ that encapsulate somewhat of the ‘messy nature of multiple self-hood(s)’ and the most lasting ostensibly unchanging characteristics of individual’s self-identity (Carroll and Levy 2008, Shortt and Warren 2012).

As indicated earlier on, I had 45 participants whom I interviewed and returned their disposable cameras after a month, each of these respondents were asked to a ‘one-to-one, face-to-face photo-interview’ where the images each respondent had taken were discussed and explored in a collaborative manner. The lengths of the semi-structured interviews were between 45 minutes and an hour and each was recorded onto a digital Dictaphone and later transcribed.

### **3.7 Data collection**

Obtaining access to research within the education sector is a difficult process. Gaining access at South East College (SEC) was achieved through networking. This was managed by making contact with the principal of my former sixth form who facilitated an introduction to the head teacher of SEC via email. Thereafter, written correspondence was sent to the head teacher explaining the intentions of the research project. A meeting was duly arranged with the head teacher to further explain in person as well as to reassure the head teacher that the institution would be anonymised and that the findings would not cause any detriment to the institution. At this meeting one also had to sign a visit agreement form.

At the time of this initial introduction the staff were located in the old building, and were due to move to their new building during the summer of 2011. At the meeting the head teacher requested I provide an in-depth written account, explaining the research endeavour, the purpose of the investigation, and the duration of the research period, for him to send the details to the teaching staff. The head teacher circulated the required information to the staff and asked whether they would like to participate in the research. With this information the head teacher included my contact details so teachers could make direct contact with any further inquiry about the research. Once the exact starting date for the data collection was known, arrangements were made to meet up with the staff in their departmental staffroom.

Before embarking on the research I was required to undergo a CRB check. Once done, I was able to arrange with the head teacher that the research would commence from the first week of July 2011. On arrival I was given access to a room to work in,

along with a temporary access card. An invitation was also extended to attend a board meeting where the head teacher was able to make more face-to-face introductions. During the board meeting I made a short presentation of myself and the research endeavour. After the meeting, informal discussions with teachers were held to further detail my research aims and also to reassure them that the research would not harm them in any way.

The research at SEC started in between academic years. The research commenced in July 2011 for three weeks and then resumed in September, at the start of the academic year. Six months in total was spent gathering data, as shown in **Table 1** below.

<b>Attendance at SEC July 2011 to January 2012</b>	
<b>Months observed</b>	<b>Number of days observed</b>
July	10 days
September	12 days
October	9 days
November	9 days (due to Ofsted inspection)
December	10 days
January	14 days
<b>Total number of Months = 6</b>	<b>Total number of days = 64</b>

**Table 1 Overview of SEC attendance**

When considering the period of time allocated to gathering data, it should be noted that data was not being gathered during half term, as well as for two weeks in October due to an Ofsted inspection. During the first week of the research project teachers were asked if it would be possible to go and observe their teaching, to which they agreed. In this way, I was able to get to know the teachers who subsequently

extended their invitation from the classroom to the departmental staffroom. When accompanying them in their departmental staffroom, they talked to their colleagues about the research. I was then able to convey more information as regards the research and recruit more teachers for providing data. In other words, this was a snowballing method which I benefited from (Moriarty 1983). Teachers who were interested in taking part in the research gave over their timetable and granted access to their lessons whenever a free period arose. Upon making timetabling selections the teachers were told in advance exactly when their lessons would be observed.

The approach allowed the creation of a bespoke timetable featuring allocated times for different lessons across different departments. After a month at the institution teachers were given a disposable camera with the request to take five or six pictures that conveyed special meaning to them. Teachers were asked to take pictures of what seemed to be important to them and their profession. The aim of this approach was to explore how teachers construct the notion of the current space, change and how that forms and re-forms their occupational identity. The disposable cameras were made available to them for approximately 1 month. The photographs were developed and used to bolster data gathered from the semi-structured interviews. These were organised during the last month of the data collection phase, lasting anywhere from between 45 minutes to an hour.

The research at North College (NC) started in February 2012 and lasted for approximately six months until July. Yet, at this institution I was not given an office but I was given an ID card. At this institution data collection took place three days per week, as shown in **Table 2** below.

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**Attendance at NC  
February 2012 to July 2012**

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<b>Months observed</b>	<b>Number of days observed</b>
February	12 days
March	14 days
April	7 days
May	14 days
June	9 days
July	6 days
<b>Total number of Months = 6</b>	<b>Total number of days = 62</b>

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**Table 2 Overview of NC attendance**

As part of the research process here at NC, as at SEC, teachers who were willing to participate extended an invitation to their departmental staffroom where I had an opportunity to socialise and recruit more research respondents. As at SEC, teachers here also gave me their teaching timetable with invitations to attend their lessons.

For teachers across both institutions, confidentiality and anonymity were expressed as being very important. They were duly assured of the fact that their institutions were to be anonymised and their identity undisclosed. Teachers from both institutions signed a consent form detailing the purpose of the research and declaring confidentiality pertaining to the use of the data gathered for the project. A copy of the transcribed interview was given back to the teachers where they had an opportunity to reflect back on what was said. Along with the transcribed interview they also received their recorded interview as a way of verifying what was said in interview.

### ***3.7.1 Using visual prompts in semi-structured interviews***

Interviews were semi-structured in nature and each respondent was requested to commence the interview in the same way – that is, an interview protocol was developed to ensure consistency, yet allowing sufficient flexibility to modify the approach, in line with ground theory underpinning the present research, in order to identify emergent themes (Bryman and Bell 2007). Similarly, ‘generic’ questions were frequently asked in order to inspire additional narrative. The interviews were conducted in the participant’s place of work, considering the fact that being interviewed in a familiar environment can trigger thoughts, emotions and the expression of these through the narrative (Bryman and Bell 2011; Shortt 2014). Prior to conducting the interviews the photographs taken by teachers were placed on the table in no particular order. They were placed on the table as a reminder for the teachers as they responded to questions and had the opportunity to reflect on their experiences by looking at photographs that they took. This technique enables a researcher to maintain some organisation and structure during the interview, without being too rigid or possibly missing key aspects. It also facilitates the development of an audit trail to justify the qualitative nature of the research.

To accompany more visual forms of data, i.e. photographs, semi-structured interviews are the most suitable research method given the limited resources available and when conducting research over a short period of time (Bryman and Bell 2007). The combination of methodologies enables a researcher to gain greater control over timing concerns and at the same time allow for a certain degree of autonomy for the participants to express their narratives honestly. As claimed by Holstein and Gubrium (1999) interviews are appropriate for the purposes of social

study because they take into consideration ‘subjectivity, difficulty and perspective’. In other words, interviews are appropriate for explaining a difficult concept because they enable a researcher to gain a further in-depth scrutiny of the subject (Bryman 2004). By adopting this approach one has the opportunity to develop an in-depth conversation with each participant (May 1997), and at the same time teachers have the opportunity to answer the questions in their own words, including any specialist technical terms and/or popular ‘jargon’.

Additionally, this approach enables the researcher to discover the narratives that teachers utilise when referring to buildings, and the narratives they use to talk about their professional roles. On top of this, by adopting the semi-structured interview approach one is able to examine teachers’ narratives about the new organisational space and scrutinise how such spatial narratives relate to a teacher’s professional identity. This technique gives one the opportunity to further clarify issues which have been raised during observational research.

### ***3.7.2 Non-participant observation***

In this study I also used observation studies. Observation in this study helped me to deepen my understanding of teachers’ daily activities. The observation took place over a period of six months across each institution where approximately 64 days were spent at SEC and 62 days at NC. This observation method allows a researcher to study teachers’ actions in the workplace without participating or being part of the team (this is the same for both schools). Therefore, whilst gaining an appreciation of a teacher’s role and daily activity one does not directly interfere in their work, although it is accepted that one’s presence may have an indirect influence.



Deliberately adopting an overt stance, I purposively informed teachers in both schools of my role as a researcher (Bryman 2004). This method seeks to facilitate the assessment of teachers' narratives of the new organisational space and how they connect this with their professional identity (Bryman and Bell 2011). Again, this allows a researcher to study teachers' relationships and to understand how they make use of the surrounding working environment in terms of their occupational identity (Bryman 2004).

Potter (1996, p 98) claims that 'observation is a technique of gathering data through direct contact with an object – usually another human being. The researcher watches the behaviour and documents the properties of the object.' Applying this claim to the present study, through observation held throughout both institutions one was able to gather direct data from the teachers and head teachers from both institutions. Throughout the research, the opportunity to engage in informal discussions with both head teachers was available and especially about the rationale of the new building as well as to discover more information about how teachers were supposed to utilise the allocated space.

Likewise, at both institutions interest was awarded to observing the different settings. Across both institutions observations were made of teachers' lessons, as well as whilst teachers were in their departmental staffrooms, and in communal areas, such as canteens and the terrace. Thus, this technique enabled one to gather first hand data from the participants and at the same time allowed one to observe their behaviour in the classroom as well as their social interactions in both formal and informal settings. As argued by Bryman (2004) observational forms of data are useful and are utilised to supplement and explain data originating from interviews. In

this research one's presence at both institutions enables one to clarify what was said during my semi-structured interviews which would have not been possible otherwise. For instance, one foundation of observational data in connection with interviewing was the ability to observe teachers' behaviours, facial expressions, gestures and bodily movements. Data from these sources are then utilised to shed light on the meaning of a teacher's oral comments bolstering data gleaned from observations in teachers' classrooms and departmental rooms, which serve as indicators of their experiences.

Equally, observational data for the purpose of the present research is deemed to be crucial due to the fact that the research is concerned with gathering teachers' experiences in their working environment, which was achieved by being around the institution(s) with the teachers. In coupling these data with the collection of textual data, observations were recorded in written form and this was included during interviews. In adopting this technique, immediacy was crucial to the research in order to preserve accurate memory of the observations and a contribution to an understanding of the experiences during one's time at both institutions. Hence to do so, it was necessary to record one's observations directly in written form. It must be noticed, however, that 'the quality of observational data are highly dependent on the skill, training, and competence of the evaluator' (Patton 1987, p 70). With this in mind, it was necessary to identify and explain those observations that contribute to an elucidated and satiated account. This is because not everything identified in an interview was noteworthy, and in some cases, important observations were not instantaneously noticeable. Thus, as with generating valuable interview data, constructing effective observational data necessitates training and experience.

### 3.7.3 *Documentary data*

Finally, for the purpose of the study at hand, use was made of documentary data, requiring a study of all documents that related to both schools in terms of national and organisational level policies. Documentary data at national level includes documents that discuss and explain the proposed changes outlined in the government initiatives. Documentary data at the organisational level includes documents that discuss the organisational policy relating to the new organisational design and explore what teachers are permitted to do with their allocated space. The purpose of this data is to enable me to examine any written documentation that relates to the alteration of the space, the purposes behind it, and the intended product of these alterations. For example, in analysing the national and organisational policies the main aim is to establish the intention of the new reform.

At the organisational level, the written proposals of the new organisational spaces at both institutions are analysed. In these reports one notes the rationale behind the changes made at organisational level at both schools. Utilising documentary data enables one to examine the context and rationale of the two case studies (Bryman 2004). One is able to establish the perceived space and the intention behind new organisational spaces across both institutions. Furthermore, it enables one to verify the interview data and present justification for the conclusions (Saunders *et al* 2007). However, documentary data can be problematic with regard to ‘credibility and representativeness’ (Bryman and Bell 2011). To alleviate these concerns, the data has been highly scrutinised by evaluating the documentary data in accord with the interviews, as Bryman (2004) suggests.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

In this study I used two methods of analysing the data gathered through my fieldwork. The first method was content analysis, which involved the analysis of the interviews, observation and documentary data with the aim of identifying key words, paragraphs or themes (Bryman and Bell 2007; 2011). This approach enabled me to identify the recurring terms or phrases that came up time after time. The purpose of content analysis is to develop knowledge and insight into the concept under investigation from the contextual data gathered (Bryman and Bell 2011). My second method was relational analysis, where I began by identifying the key concepts that arose during my fieldwork and interviews (Bryman 2004). Here I explored the connections between the concepts in order to identify meaningful relationships. The main focus here was on meaning and that was the fundamental starting point in recognising the key concepts in the text.

In this study I looked at teachers' subjective experiences and gave particular consideration to the way teaching spaces formed and occupied their occupational identity. The particular consideration for this study was the spatial setting for teachers teaching and working in seemingly communal, flexible and open space settings. This was an inductive research study approach (Bryman 2004). Inductive research involves making specific observations, then identifying patterns in the observations giving a basis for broader generalisations and then developing tentative theories (Neuman 2003). This is a bottom up approach whereby the theory is generated from the data gathered in the case study (Bryman and Bell 2011). In other words, an inductive approach in interviewing and gathering data from the qualitative

research means letting the ideas and concepts and themes emerge from the data from the interviews and your research study (Neuman 2003).

In terms of data analysis in this study I have adopted an 'iterative method', meaning that here I have adjusted analytic tactics (Curry *et al* 2009; Bryman and Bell 2011). Analysis of the content of a first interview informs the approach to gathering data in the second interview, and in turn analysis of the content of the second interview informs the gathering of data in the third interview and so on. In other words here I analysed data 'line by line in detail', examining each sentence, and used a code throughout my study (Jorgensen 1989). At the same time I organised my subject comments into groups whose names arose from terms used by the participants, or expressions which I found from the interviews to be appropriate.

In this study, the first stage of the analysis was to identify the units of analysis and I did this by breaking up the interview into chunks of data, words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs using NVIVO software. I started by putting each sentence of each interview on to a new line. Long sentences which involved several parts were broken up into separate chunks of data. This was not a formatting process but a line by line analysis to gain a feel for my data. I also like to have some of my work on paper, so I printed off some interviews to analyse them and this is where I had the opportunity to manually break the interview into separate chunks of data. I then analysed other data from the computer by using NVIVO software.

Stage two of my analysis was to go through my interviews and data and gave a one or two word summary or code to each chunk (line or data). The code described the meaning of the segment of the text. This was open coding. Here I used a word from

the sentence that I was coding which helped me to create the open code. After open coding the entire interview I made a list of all the codes that derived from the interview. I then looked for similar codes and looked for redundant codes (Bryman and Bell 2011). My objective was to reduce the long list of codes down to a smaller, more manageable number. This was an integrative process so I went back to my original data and checked the new codes matched. In other words, this was a constant comparison approach (Bryman 2007).

At stage three I recoded my codes derived from the data. This was the closed coding process and the aim was to identify overarching themes or categories that grouped my original codes. I did this by reducing my initial codes to sub-codes and I then narrowed them down to my final overarching codes. The final themes reflected the purpose of the research and were exhaustive. I placed all my data into categories and they represented what was in the data. Ultimately, I ended up with a range of themes, which included ordinary themes (the ones that I expected to come up), unexpected themes (the ones that surprised me and I did not expect to find), hard to classify themes (the ones that contained ideas that did not necessarily fit into one theme and overlapped with other themes) along with major and sub-themes (major ideas or the minor, secondary ideas). Sub-themes then fitted into major themes.

Stage four was to collect all interview quotes within a theme and examine the ideas that made up that theme and sub-theme. Here I was particularly interested in how they interact with each other, for instance is there a sequence or order in which the information belongs (Bryman and Bell 2007)? Similarly I looked for evidence of the relationships between the overarching themes.

At stage five came the repetition of this process with the rest of the transcripts where, as I went along, I found some new emerging themes. When this happened I returned to the early interviews and compared the new themes to the old ones and adjusted my ideas. In other words, this followed the constant comparison process (Bryman and Bell 2007). In this way I developed a classification tree, looking from specific to the general. Here I started with the interview data, moving to my codes, then to my sub-themes and finally my themes.

The final stage was the writing up. On the basis of the completed analysis of all interviews and data, I was able to construct a summative narrative from the themes, sub-themes and codes (Bryman and Bell 2007). This was my description of my themes, quotes from my interviews to support my ideas and a discussion of relationships between the sub-themes and the themes.

With regard to photo analysis, Shroeder (2006) argues that photos and images hold multiple significances and can be translated in a variety of ways. However, they may demand different analytical approaches to bring together such meaning and therefore we are justified in cautious reliance upon the most suitable tools available. According to Catalani and Minkler (2010) there are limited analytical tools identified by researchers who make use of visual data. But Bell *et al* (2014) claim that visual analysis is advancing in this area of organisation studies. In this study I integrated my own approach to analysing data provided by teachers as well as relying on the current analytical approaches. Pink (2007, p 117) supports this method and states that ‘using an existing method of organizing, categorizing and interpreting visual data materials or invent[ing] your own’ is acceptable. The method of analysis used in this research combined the significances given to pictures by teachers (textual

narratives) and the content of the pictures – this included what they are of (visual narratives): a similar approach to that utilised by Shortt (2014).

The first stage of the analytical procedure was the picture-led meaning ascription. This is where pictures were grouped based on the meaning assigned to them by teachers. This tactic was undertaken during the semi-structured interviews. Here teachers gave their own interpretation and meanings of the pictures they took and they gave their own accounts of those pictures. This is not a new process of analysis: it has been used in the past by researchers such as van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001) who adapted the photo-elicitation method. The second stage of the analytical procedure involved theming. In line with Saldana (2012) I started by looking at transcripts and field notes as an element of the introductory analyses of these manuscripts. I then coded in the data to maintain the inductive participant positioned nature of the research. For instance, data included in this study, including codes such as, ‘my own classroom’, ‘our departmental staffroom’ and ‘our socialising area’ were assigned to significant elements of the transcripts in the course of line by line analysis. This coding procedure steered me to the developing theme such as that of ‘hiding spaces’.

The final process of the analytical procedure was researcher-led prototype analysis. Saldana (2012) claims that the analysis of interview transcripts could be part of ‘first cycle coding’. Therefore, this final phase can be viewed as an element of the second phase where surprising findings may develop. In this study, all pictures and transcripts with precise themes were assembled, re-examined and their visual and textual materials were scrutinised based on what was portrayed in the picture and said in the interviews. This was a crucial element of the visual analysis for this study.



This is because it enabled the images to feed back into the analytical development. This approach extended my analytical approach beyond merely utilising pictures as prompts for discussions in the interviews with teachers. As highlighted by Collier (2001) a concluding uncovering of themes enabled me as a researcher to recognise and distinguish repetitions along with resemblances and dissimilarities. For instance, images linked with professional spaces theme included main staffroom, boardroom and atrium. Through this approach the notion of public spaces emerged.

Equally, my approach to empirical research is influenced by grounded theory. This is an iterative process of data gathering followed by analysis. In other words, an interview is followed by analysis determining what issues emerge from the interview (Denzin *et al.*, 2005), followed again by investigating those issues in the next interview, analysing that interview to determine what issues emerge, and then analysing it to identify further issues and so on. This was a continuing process until I found consistent results and no new issues emerged. In this way, in this study I used learning from grounded theory.

### **3.9 Codes of ethics**

In undertaking the research one follows the advice as outlined by Saunders *et al* (2007); namely to handle findings with extreme confidentiality. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study (full-disclosure). Participants were informed about the nature of the research and offered the opportunity to withdraw at any stage (informed consent). They were assured that refusal to participate in the study at any stage would not affect any of their rights. By giving the interviewees anonymity more candid answers were gleaned, giving one greater understanding of the

workplace. One also has a responsibility to uphold the reputation of the institution and its employees. In addressing this issue I assured the participants about the confidentiality of the information they provided (Bell 2005). Hence, no source, contributors, or institutions are acknowledged or mentioned without written authorisation of the originator (Easterby-Smith *et al* 2002). Assurance was given that the study would not harm schools or contributors (Lyons 2005). Prior to beginning the research, I made sure that the complete informed agreement of contributors was received by clearly elucidating the purpose of the research (Lyons 2005; Bryman and Bell 2007, 2011).

### **3.10 Summary**

In this methodological chapter I have established my ontological, epistemological and methodological frames of the thesis. In this study one adopts an interpretivist paradigm. Hence, the study recognises that researchers select an active part in the interpretation of knowledge. More importantly, all knowledge produced is loaded with researchers' suppositions and beliefs. The research design in this study is based on two separate case studies in the educational settings. From the methodological standpoint, this thesis adopts a qualitative research approach along with the narrative inquiry in order to address gaps in prevailing research. Data collection in this study included visual methods, semi-structured interviews, observation and documentary data. Having discussed the research methodology, the next chapter focuses on the analysis of data and ensuing empirical findings. The chapter starts with a context chapter followed by its analysis.

## **Chapter 4: Context chapter**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the description of the study context to show what has changed at both institutions. This chapter starts by providing a brief background of both schools with the aim of identifying how decisions are made at schools and who influences decision-making. It further outlines the key changes at both institutions and highlights the rationale as to why they have changed. In doing so, this chapter focuses on the overall policy landscape with the aim of discovering what government policies have to say about this change.

### **4.2 Brief background of the schools**

The new South East College (SEC) building replaces the former 1930s main building. The college is located on the existing SEC site on Placehouse Lane. The site lies to the south-west of a village located within the Bradmore Green conservation area. The SEC was opened in July 2011. The total investment for this project was over £40 million. The new building is designed as two linear blocks to accommodate the formal teaching and resource areas with a central atrium or ‘glazed street’ as the main circulation route and to accommodate informal learning space. Each departmental area has its own hub with a central staff base, its own resource area and easy access to WC facilities. It has three new science labs, a media floor that incorporates a radio station and TV studio, visual arts gallery cafe, specialist music rooms, resource centres for each subject area and a fresh contemporary cafeteria. Their Sports and Performance Centre, theatre and outside sports facilities

also provide excellent opportunities for students and teachers pursuing sports and performing arts careers.

This college has over 50 courses on offer – a mix of A Level and BTEC subjects that allow for really flexible study options. They deliver a broad range of academic and vocational courses at Levels 2 and 3 to around 1000 students. Students come from a widespread social class but predominantly lower class families. Their teachers are experts at teaching 16–19 year olds and the college offers the friendly, secure and supportive environment of a school sixth form whilst allowing the freedom of a larger college. At the SEC there are over 1300 full time students and over 90 qualified teachers. These teachers teach around the school(s) in their own department/faculties. In this institution there are different physical hierarchical boundaries that inform sub-group identities. There is a head teacher, assistant head teacher/assistant, college leaders, college manager, college administrator, college mentors in each college and of course the head of the department/faculty, teachers and assistant teachers. Please refer to Figures 1 and 2 for further details.

The construction of this building provides a very secure area for its staff and students. Anyone going to the college has to pass through the security gates and has to wear their photo ID with them at all times and that includes all staff, students and visitors. On top of this, there are surveillance cameras around the college with the aim of providing a secure working and learning environment.

The layout of the building was described as being a simple, formal, flexible, teaching classroom to the external perimeter of each block. Between the classrooms and the atrium, a zone of flexible resource area has been created, allocated to each

curriculum area, to provide curriculum support space, group working, meeting space, individual study and/or formal break out space – aimed at suiting the teaching style of each department. This zone is seen as a semi-formal teaching space and is visible from the atrium. Staff bases and departmental head offices flank the resource areas and this is aimed at promoting good ‘natural’ surveillance and to make staff more accessible to students. Equally, this college provides ‘open shared’ spaces for all its teachers, meaning that teachers have their own computer and do not have an allocated office or a classroom for them. They are free to move and work around the college. The atrium forms a third, less formal and less acoustically sensitive zone, where staff, students and visitors enter the building through one secure entrance and where they gather, view displays of college work and have access to all areas of the college. This forms the central hub of the college from which all areas can be accessed and from where the activities of college across the building can be viewed.

The North College moved into its new buildings back in September 2009. Built within the green belt at a total cost of over £32 million, this new college incorporates a mass of environmentally-friendly features and state-of-the-art facilities. These facilities range from the modern sports centre and the floodlit all-weather surfaces to the 400-seat theatre. It also provides a much-needed resource for the local community, enabling this college to operate effectively as an 'Extended College'. This institution accommodates 1,500 pupils and has over 85 qualified teachers. It replaces four separate schools, and is within the boundary of the main site retaining the whole of the extensive playing fields. Just like the SEC, at this college students come from a widespread social class but predominantly lower class families. These teachers teach around the school(s) in their own department/faculties. The

management structure is identical with that of SEC. There is a head teacher, assistant head teacher assistant, college leaders, college manager, college administrator, college mentors in each college and of course the head of the department/faculty, teachers and assistant teachers. Please refer to Figures 1 and 2 for further details.

The structural design incorporates three faculty blocks, which are home to Humanities and Languages, Maths and Science and Art, Design and Technology. The college is linked to the three faculty buildings - design/technology, science/maths, and humanities – by glazed bridges. The main building, described as the hub, hosts the Sixth Form, the Community Learning Centre and all the Performing Arts facilities for Dance, Drama and Music, including a 400-seat theatre. It also includes extensive sports facilities such as a large Sports Hall complex, an all-weather pitch and a multi-use games area. All these facilities are available as part of the school's extended hours programme for use by teachers in their leisure time with their colleagues after teaching.

The buildings at this institution offer a bright and spacious space for teaching, eating, breakout, display and open access to the learning resource facilities for its students and staff. The physical design of this college also provides a secure environment for its staff and students. Students at this college have to wear a uniform and have their ID cards with them at all times. All staff have to have their ID card with them at all times and anyone wishing to visit this college has to wear an ID card provided by reception. Anyone wanting to enter the college has to pass security gates. This college has surveillance cameras throughout the college with the aim of providing a secure environment for its staff, students and visitors.

The layout of this institution incorporates an open shared space for teachers and students to work in. At this institution there is one flexible resource area to create individual work/study. This resource area is located at the main hub and is at the same place as the library and this provides good surveillance from the Librarian. Next to the reception there is a main staffroom. The faculty/departmental staffrooms are located next to classrooms and this is to provide surveillance and support for their pupils.

On scrutinising the governing body at both institutions, it appears to have the same structure. The full governing body at both schools includes parent governors, LA governor, staff governors and co-opted governors. The governing committees include: teaching and learning, people and premises, finance and cabinet group. Their duty is to conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement for the pupil and they do so by engaging in three core strategic functions, namely:

- *Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; (what is our plan?)*
- *Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; (what does the data tell us?) and*
- *Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure money is well spent (what is our 3-year budget plan<sup>1</sup>?)*

Their strategic role is to act in a way that ensures a division of responsibilities between them and the head teacher. The head teacher has a legal duty to organise,

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<sup>1</sup> This text is taken out of one researched institution website and full reference can be provided in request.

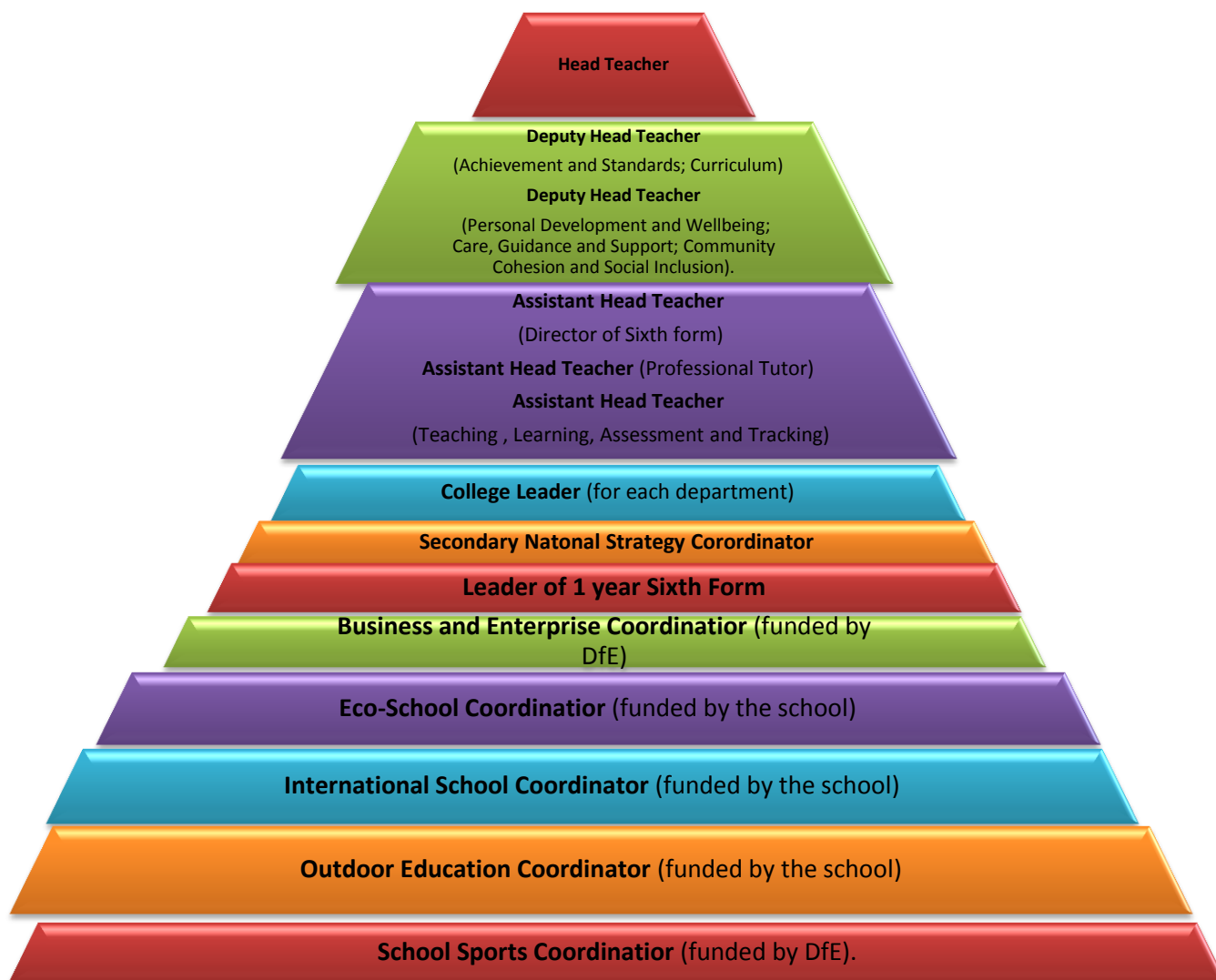
manage and control the school and is responsible for the educational performance of the school. The governing body on the other hand provides the strategic framework and ethos within which the head teacher operates. It helps set the priorities and principles by which performance will be measured, and reviews performance and supports and challenges the head teacher throughout the year to ensure the priorities are achieved. Its function is to focus on the key issues of raising standards of achievement, establishing high expectations and promoting effective teaching and learning. The strategic role requires the governing body to take a step back from day-to-day management of the school and allow the head teacher to undertake the role in a manner thought best for the school. It is a process which requires some work to ensure that where boundaries are set, they are not breached.

To conclude, the governance team influence the decision-making and they have to approve the major decisions. They do not block decisions but their role is to raise critical awareness of the decision-making. For example, the North College recently has moved into an academy and to do this the governors had to agree with this change. The management is prevalent across colleges, subject areas and different hierarches as shown below in Figure 1 and Figure 2.



<b>Teacher Staffing Structure (Faculty/Subject Roles)</b>				
<b>Faculty of Languages</b>	<b>Faculty of Maths and ICT</b>	<b>Faculty of Science, Technology and PE</b>	<b>Faculty of Arts</b>	<b>Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences</b>
<b>Faculty Leader</b>	Faculty Leader	Faculty Leader	Faculty Leader	Faculty Leader
<b>Subject leader EN</b>	Subject Leader Maths	Subject Leader PE	Arts College Director	Subject Leader History
<b>Subject Leader MFL</b>	HoD ICT	Subject Leader Biology	Subject Leader Art	Subject Leader Bus. St & Economics
		Subject Leader Chemistry	Subject Leader Dance	Subject Leader Geography
		Subject Leader Physics	Subject Leader Drama & Performing Arts	Subject Leader RE
		Subject Leader Engineering and Technology	Subject Leader Media Arts	Subject Leader PSHe and Citizenship
			Subject Leader Music	Subject Leader Social Sciences
		Subject Leader Food Technology		
		Subject Leader BTEC Science		
		BTEC PE		

**Figure 1 Teacher staffing structure at both institutions**



**Figure 2 Hierarchy structure at both institutions**

#### **4.2.1 The overall policy landscape**

The Building Schools for the Future programme (BSF) was the largest school building initiative since the Victorian period. This formed part of the Labour government policy, which was introduced in 2003, where the government put aside £55 billion to rebuild all secondary and further education institutions in England. This programme was more than just replacing classrooms with leaking roofs or buildings with collapsing brickwork. This programme was more about meeting the

demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching approach. It was about introducing a step-change in teenagers' education.

This programme aimed at providing inspirational buildings that made staff and pupils alike feel valued and worthwhile, and to do this they would be given access to work and be able to learn in an institution fit for 21<sup>st</sup> century demands. In achieving this aim, the government proposed to offer a 'state-of-the-art' building project equipped with state-of-the-art computer technology services, thus changing the layout from that of a traditional school to a more 'modern' school layout. The main aim was to shift the teaching style away from sitting in a classroom packed with lines of wooden desks in front of a teacher with a chalk board to providing a state-of-the-art learning hub where students would be able to use wi-fi to work on their individual laptops in order to study and conduct research independently. The new building project was thus aimed at providing flexible facilities that could be sufficiently utilised in even 50 years' time.

Initially, the Labour government prioritised fourteen projects in seventeen socially disadvantaged local authorities in a bid to promote their educational realisation and fulfilment. In this way local authorities managed the project and building plans across multiple schools with the assistance of officials from a quango named Partnership for Schools (PfS). More importantly, the fundamental part of the development was based on the involvement of staff, governors, and students from the schools themselves. In this way, the school would come up with the vision of what they would like to have in their newly designed building as well as how they would provide it. Theoretically, the decision-making on the new building design was developed by the staff at the institution. After this, private sector partners had to be

found to achieve this aim and undertake the actual building work. When that happened then a local education partnership between the council, the institution, and the private sector contractors was expected to work together to deliver the new building.

With this initiative there were a number of issues that the government had to deal with. The programme did not start on time as initially anticipated, and then within two years of the programme, the Labour government had to step in to scrutinise why the programme was going slowly and how they could improve on it. This caused a lot of pressure within local councils with a lot of them asking for more capital and time. There was also the issue of reshaping the educational provision during the process because it took time to plan, as well as prepare for it, and consult on it accordingly. By the end of the second year of the introduction of this initiative, 72 local authorities entered the proposal but just five of them reached the position where they were able to start building. Subsequently, this required a lot of work for the head teachers and other staff alike.

In 2007 the Labour government decided to review the current scheme and decided that council bidding for BSF funds had to pass the readiness test before their proposal was accepted. To achieve this aim more assistance was given to schools and local councils in the way of design supporters and other specialists. It was decided that such experts were needed to ensure the plans were adequate and could go ahead. When the new Conservative government came into office, members argued that the BSF programme needed changing. They argued that reasonable planning and thorough consultation was required to make sure that they got things in the right order. In June 2010, 178 schools were built and a further 231 were near completion

with a further 1,100 schools with plans to build. Later, the Conservative government scrapped the scheme leaving around 150 school projects in ‘limbo’ with a verdict to be reached on whether they would proceed or not. In the end, there were only around 75 schools which were told that their project was to go ahead. Now this scheme has been closed leaving a number of schools without a new building.

#### ***4.2.2 Why the two schools wanted to change***

The main reason why both institutions wanted to have a new organisational space was because their old building was outdated, overcrowded, and unfit for 21<sup>st</sup> century education. The national policy changes in education and the introduction of the BSF programme therefore seemingly benefited the two schools researched for this study. Hence, both institutions have had a newly built environment. The transformation between the old and new schools is illustrated below to allow one to visualise the key changes under discussion in the analysis, starting with SEC showing the old building and then the new building (external and internal views) as presented in **Figures 1, 2, and 3** below, respectively.

SEC was opened in September 2011. The total investment for this project was over £40 million. The new, purpose-designed building gives a ‘university feel’ to the college. There is lots of light, huge amounts of space, and best of all, fantastic learning facilities and study areas for students and teachers to deliver their subjects. The building has three new science labs, a media floor that incorporates a radio station and TV studio, visual arts gallery cafe, specialist music rooms, resource centres for each subject area, and a fresh contemporary cafeteria. Their Sports and Performance Centre, theatre, and outside sports facilities also provide excellent

opportunities for students and teachers pursuing sports and performing arts careers. They have given much thought to providing suitable facilities for all students and teachers and this building opens up the opportunity to create a positive and inclusive atmosphere for all.



**Figure 3 Old Building at SEC**



**Figure 4 External view of the new building at SEC**



**Figure 5 Internal view of the new building at SEC**

Similarly, NC moved into new 'state-of-the-art' buildings, with the capacity for 1,500 students, in September 2009. The project replaces four separate schools, and is within the boundary of the main site retaining the whole of the extensive playing fields. Built within the green belt at a total cost of over £32 million, this new college incorporates a mass of environmentally-friendly features and state-of-the-art facilities. Importantly, these facilities, from the sports centre and the floodlit all-weather surfaces to the 400-seat theatre, also provide a much-needed resource for the local community, enabling this college to operate effectively as an 'Extended College'.

As already touched upon, the design incorporates three faculty blocks on the new campus, which is a home to Humanities and Languages, Maths and Science and Art, Design and Technology. The college is linked across three faculty buildings - design/technology, science/maths, and humanities – by glazed bridges. The main building, described as the hub, hosts the Sixth Form, the Community Learning Centre and all the Performing Arts facilities for Dance, Drama and Music, including a 400-seat theatre. It also includes extensive sports facilities, including a large Sports Hall complex, an all-weather pitch and a multi-use games area. All these facilities are available as part of the schools extended hours programme for use by teachers in their leisure time with their colleagues after teaching. In order to visualise the key changes being discussed in the analysis, Figures 4 to 8 illustrate NC, starting with a view of the old building followed by the new building.





**Figure 6 External view of the old building at NC**



**Figure 7 external view of the old building at NC**



**Figure 8 external view of the new building at NC**



**Figure 9 internal view of the new building at NC**





**Figure 10 internal view of the new building at NC**

### **4.3 Chapter summary**

To summarise, the above contextual analysis provides a description of both institutions. This chapter then proceeds to show and explain the overall policy landscape to establish what has changed as well as providing the rationale for change. The chapter then gives a summary account of both institutions, showing what was changed and the reasons for the change. To conclude, it is therefore arguable that these case studies are of intrinsic interest to the present research study considering that millions of pounds have been spent on these buildings with the specific aim of improving the teaching environment and subsequent working practices. These renovations have been recent enough that teachers still have a clear memory of the old physical environment, yet would have become used enough to the

new environment to have formed new narratives. As the physical environment in both institutions has recently changed it is of interest to examine teachers' narratives of those changes and how these spatial narratives relate to a teacher's professional identity. As highlighted in the literature review, this remains an emerging exploration and it would be a perfect opportunity to realise the influence of organisational space on teachers' professional identity in both schools. To explore the rationale of such changes, in the next empirical chapter I explore the managerial perspective that arises from teachers' narratives.

## **Chapter 5: Narratives of imagining and realising ‘the future’ in accounts of policy makers and head teachers.**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The earlier work of Araujo and Easton (1996) reminds us that in a situation where a change takes place in the organisation the main responsibility of the management team is to present a consistent message across the organisation. Dunford and Jones (2000) claim that the term ‘vision’ that we hear from the management team when there is a change in the organisation is part of this belief. Equally, this is an idea that somehow it interrelates with the implied concept ‘of the social construction of meaning’ (Dunford and Jones 2000, p 1208). They also argue that whenever there is a change in the organisation employees form their own interpretations of experiences. Thus, when there is a change in the organisation the management team are not able to stop this practice happening. In such situations the management team aim to provide a common understanding amongst the employees and they do this by conveying their own interpretation of experiences. This is because when there is a change in the organisation it involves individuals making sense of it and building their own interpretations. Therefore, in order to make sense of these changes, this chapter will revisit and apply the concept of conceived space (derived from Lefebvre’s thinking as discussed in the literature review) and analyse how the dominant space is conceived, imposed and communicated by policy actors and head teachers.

The utilisation of language in the organisation frequently takes a ‘narrative form’ (Dunford and Jones 2000, p 1208). In such instances, narratives are used as being

textual in communicating a story of occurrences and experiences in the organisation and they are constructed into a 'temporal unity by means of a plot' (Polkinghorne 1995, p 5). In this instance, the past is considered to be a failure and a tool that we can learn from and reflect upon. As such, a significant event is achieved by offering this change which is formed by the government (du Gay2000).

The present chapter seeks to assess how space and identity are represented in policy at the national and organisational level. It takes an incremental approach to demonstrate how the successive step in thinking and policy was narrated at the national and organisational level. In this chapter the BSF policy is explored by focusing on the narrative perspective as a tool for providing crucial language terms, thoughts and perceptions, through which development and improvement in the secondary education can be imagined and practically reviewed. From the narrative perspective these policy documents narrate something similar to an outline of consideration and action, which head teachers possibly ought to negotiate when accounting for change in the development at their schools. Therefore, this chapter aims to explore the interplay between national policy and head teachers' narratives.

As such, in this chapter we explore the narratives provided by the government and how head teachers interpret the national policy in order to uphold narratives of development and comprehensive management at their institutions. One can argue that these narratives are placed on a number of clear-cut opposites: for instance the new schools promote harmony instead of segregation; security instead of fear; success (from an Ofsted perspective) instead of failure; certainty instead of uncertainty. In sum, the driving force of this chapter is to appraise the infiltration of UK government policy underpinning the design of space into the professional

teaching domain for any influence that may transpire upon how teachers in the UK use narratives to create a sense of self, a sense of identity. The later chapters explore these narratives, where these provisions were constructed to indicate togetherness and to bring in inclusivity between staff and the management alike.

## **5.2 Narratives of the national policy**

Grounded by Lefebvre's (1991) notion of representational spaces to explore changes in the physical environment, particular reference is made to government policy as documented by the 'Building Schools for the Future' (BSF) initiative. Specifically, focus is on four sources, in line with the approach taken by de Besten *et al* (2011). Analyses commence by examining 'Building Schools for the Future: Consultation on a New Approach to Capital investment' (DfES 2003) followed by 'Transforming Schools: An Inspirational Guide to Remodelling Education' (DfES 2004), 'Classrooms for the Future: Innovative Design for Schools' (DfES 2004), and 'An Introduction to Buildings for the Future' (DCSF/4ps/PsS 2008). The aforementioned documents deal with the vision, implementation, and written rationale underpinning the proposed changes and design details of BSF. More importantly, in terms of consultation documents and guides, they represent the public face of BSF for local authorities, schools, and architects, respectively.

### ***5.2.1 Building Schools for the Future (BSF): a narrative perspective***

It is possible to understand the BSF initiative from the narrative perspective to explain and characterise the past, present and the future. In this initiative there was £55 billion put aside suggesting that there is a convincing material component assigned to this initiative. In this chapter we are interested in the rationale behind this

spending and how the success (or failure) of these projects might be imagined and reviewed. The questions which we need to refer to is in what way does one recognise and portray an adequate from inadequate building schools? What characteristics of schools buildings are related with improving success and why; which are unnoticed?

The Building Schools for the Future (2004) report shows that there are several factors that have driven change in the UK education sector, and consequently the physical environment that education inhabits. The report highlights that the BSF policy is driven to introduce new spatial design for schools and colleges in order to promote new teachers' occupational identity, as well as provide a new learning environment for teachers and students alike. The ideology behind the policy is that of providing an environment to promote a sense of new professionalism, a space to engage modern teaching. To set the scene therefore, policy-driven transformation across UK learning environments arguably stem from multifaceted interactions of government policy, economic requirements, and social developments, together with acceptance of technology, issues of sustainability, and changing pedagogy/curriculum. Bearing these forces of change into mind, translations of policy from the teacher's perspective are elucidated via novel narratives. To commence, national level policy is now further appraised to better understand why change to the spatial domain of teaching has been engendered.

### ***5.2.2 Why change the physical environment in the education sector?***

Back in 1997, the Education Secretary, David Blunkett, emphasised that *'improving the quality of school buildings is essential if we are to succeed in raising achievement'* (DfES 2004, p 4). Amongst other political pressures, the introduction



of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative was influenced by the reports from Ofsted. In the Ofsted report (1999/2000), for example, the Inspectorate of Schools presented:

*‘The condition of accommodation can affect the morale of both pupils and teachers, resulting in adverse effects on the quality of education. A quarter of secondary schools inspected had inadequate accommodation adversely affecting the quality of teaching. The current physical environment hinders the communication between teachers and managements and creates a clear hierarchical division amongst management team and workers’* (Ofsted 1999/2000, p 2–3).

This is an example of a widespread issue that Ofsted has pointed out in their inspection throughout schools in the UK. In this report, Ofsted acknowledges the impact of accommodation, understood here as the surrounding physical space, as being somewhat detrimental on an individual’s morale, be it staff or student. The significance of this quote is that Ofsted also highlights that the old architecture has led to a less than desirable effect upon teaching standards. Similarly, the old physical design of schools has led to a deterioration of open relations and communications spanning the hierarchies within schools, rather than an improving the said relations across teachers and management.

As further support, the report of DfES (2004, p 5) highlights that the old physical building adversely affects the delivery of teaching today. For instance, in this report it is stipulated:

*‘The reports from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) have stated that as many as 1 in 5 schools in England have accommodation that is in such an unsatisfactory state that the delivery of the curriculum is affected.’*

With up to 20% of schools in England deemed to be subject to an adverse physical environment it is difficult to imagine how they can be expected to deliver the curriculum, and especially in line with contemporary appeals for curriculum delivery, such as a modern teaching approach. Indeed, in absence of what is seen to be much-needed investment and modernisation of school buildings, notions such as the modern teaching approach are rendered unrealistic. Still, the DfES (2004) report highlights the importance of change in terms of teaching approach. In this report there is a discussion of the traditional *‘chalk and talk’* technique, which has always been the preferred style of delivery for many teachers. Indeed, it has only been in the last decade that a range of new technologies have entered the classroom and opened up innovative opportunities for new ways of learning and teaching. In light of such changes, this report refers to the modern teaching approach, which highlights how it is reflected in the personalised, individualised, innovative, and more flexible realms of teaching by making use of ICT.

In scrutinising the DfES (2004) the proposal is written on behalf of the Department of Education, and explicitly highlights that the BSF programme is established with the aim to make sure that English schools are constructed to allow for educational transformation. In their study they state that their focus is to create the right *‘environments, interactions and conditions for learning, and these may appear in a variety of physical and non-physical spaces’*.

Alluding to the significance of both physical and non-physical space for creating an environment conducive to learning, the BSF initiative is introduced to enhance the learning experience and fulfil the needs of the modern teaching environment. As such, the DfES (2004, p 5) argues that the BSF initiative:

*‘Create 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environments that are designed to meet the needs of teachers and learners. Excellent buildings inspire teaching and learning.’*

Seen as a source of inspiration for teachers and students alike, space as defined by physical buildings and design seemingly take on a modern vibe in response to the BSF initiative, to coincide with advancements in ICT apparent in the wider macro environment. Furthermore, in reading the government reform DfS (2003), it highlights that the BSF is aimed at providing educational transformation, which has been much needed. This is not a single process and it does not stop when a school building is completed. However, the BSF initiative concentrates on adapting space to engender the modern teaching approach, producing places for learning that are exciting, flexible, healthy, safe, secure, ICT-friendly, and environmentally suitable.

The introduction of the BSF introduces new thinking and opportunities for creating a new design for learning based on their idealised expectations of what the building should look like and how it should function. In adopting the stakeholder perspective it appears that the BSF programme aims to inspire and engage all who learn in, work in, lead, and visit schools. To illustrate, the DfES (2004, p 3) states:

*‘School buildings should inspire learning. They should nurture every pupil and member of staff. They should be a source of pride and a practical resource for the community.’*

With a definite sense of the wider community also taking pride in local school buildings, a knock-on effect in terms of learning and accessibility is duly expected. In terms of teachers and students it is positioned that school architecture can be a valuable source of inspiration as a place of nurture.

As such, the new architectural design of schools is structured in a way to reflect the modern profession. In this way, its objective can be understood as creating a welcoming and open shared space where ICT can be easily utilised to fulfil the needs and aspirations of pupils. The quote below as sourced from the DfS (2003, pg. 12) demonstrates such an objective fairly comprehensively:

*‘We are moving into a world where every school will have an area of curriculum specialism and excellence at its heart and throughout all its activity; where every school will improve the professional development of teachers and provide new and exciting opportunities for young people; where ICT will be integral to modern teaching and learning, not a bolt-on; where out-of-hours teaching and learning will become a more important part of everyday school life, with all facilities being shared between teachers; where first-class working environments will be a reality for all teachers and support staff; and where partnerships with other parts of the education system will be*

*the norm, and will tailor education to fulfil the needs and aspirations of individual pupils.'*

Of significance, it is interesting to note how the modern teaching approach renders all facilities be shared across teachers. To what extent is this feasible? How does the sharing of facilities and assumedly space, allow for effective teaching, allow for a sense of self, a sense of identity in the teaching domain of today? It appears that they have an idealised expectation of what space should have and how it should function.

To conclude, from the above-mentioned analysis of the reports one can argue that the BSF programme was implemented to provide '*21st Century building environment for modern teaching approach*'. The means to achieve this particular aim as well as address the questions posed can be tackled by paying heed to the issues raised in the following sections:

### **5.3 Key changes**

The DCSF (2008) report plays high importance in removing physical, special hierarchical boundaries and territories between the management team and teachers. In their report they argue that old architectural design at schools promote distinctive physical hierarchical boundaries between management and teachers. This implies that the old physical environment leads to a divide between management teams and teachers. The ideology of the BSF programme is to remove inflexible ideology and to provide a transparent working and learning environment for teachers and students. As such, the new architectural design is aimed at introducing 'hot-desking'/open shared spaces. The introduction of 'hot-desking' is intended to remove the

‘unhealthy dichotomies’ found in the education sector. As an example of such, no staff are permitted to claim their own office or classroom. In effect, space is used to transform their sense of continuity and fluidity to create a new bank of expectations. For instance, in DCSF (2008) it states:

*‘The ambition for a learner-led, personalised, flexible, innovative, no boundaries, education philosophy, removing unhealthy dichotomies, is represented and fulfilled through the new architectural space design. Historically, buildings have been designed to suit an education fad. The old buildings provide a clear separation between the management and teachers. There is a need for a development in collaboration in the teaching profession.’*

Conveyed is the significance of a shared space to engender a new approach to teaching, and how this is enabled by building space. One can question how they know that there is a ‘*clear separation between the management and teachers*’. It appears that they are making an assumption that the old building creates such separations between the management and teachers. It suggests that they have idealised expectations of what the education should look like and they reflect on this based on the old buildings.

Moreover, the BSF initiative aims to provide a physical environment that enables teachers to utilise the modern 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to facilitate the modern teaching approach. They believe that old buildings fail to provide the friendly use of modern technology, and as such new organisational space, modern in design will provide the desired access and application of technology in the modern teaching

domain. The belief is that the BSF initiative will support a new learning approach. For example, in DfES (2004, pg. 18):

*'ICT is already transforming the shape of teaching and learning across all subjects and ages. Not only are children being taught in new and exciting ways, but they are learning new skills to enable them to participate in our changing society and economy. Teachers are also seeing significant changes beyond the classroom. We are making sure that we have the BSF programme which achieves our radical vision of ICT in schools of the future.'*

Thus, it is believed that ICT plays an important role in today's teaching and learning environment. It is deemed that this is an exciting and a new way of teaching. The new teaching approach trains pupils for the changing society and economy. In the government reform the government note how the use of ICT is enabling a new use of space, with a call for greater social responsibility, if not corporate social responsibility. They claim that the BSF programme aims at tackling the current issues that schools and teachers have faced in the past. In this reform, the government highlights that:

*'There is a growing need for technology facilities and science laboratories, for flexible spaces for teachers, support staff and students to work in large and small groups, and for modern and well-equipped social spaces to encourage good behaviour and attendance.'*

In the DfES (2004, p 27) there is a great emphasis on e-strategy and that it argues that there is a need for transforming learning and teaching, and as such technology is at the heart of this change. The issue that was established here is that the traditional

teaching methods have not delivered enough and that there is a need for improvement. This is exactly what the BSF programme challenges. In making their point, the report argues:

*'We need a new understanding of the pedagogies appropriate for a 21st Century education system. Traditional methods have not achieved enough. The wider availability of new technology provided by the BSF programme, means that we have both the opportunity – and the responsibility – to explore new approaches to teaching and learning. The familiar and effective teaching methods of listening, reading, writing and class discussion, will of course remain important, but our teaching institutions ought to be advancing beyond the traditional formats that are still so prevalent.'*

The purpose of the BSF programme is also to provide an aesthetically pleasing environment for its staff and students in order to inspire teaching and learning. With a view to improving teacher's morale, the aesthetics of schools, as stipulated by the Department of Education, is intended to make staff, as well as students, feel proud of their school(s), and make them feel valued by providing a harmonious environment. Reflecting on this, the PwC (2007, p 48) report underlines:

*'Well designed new buildings will also provide a better working environment for the teachers and pupils, and make both feel more valued – improving aspiration and motivation.... We want staff and students to come into the school and see fantastic work on the walls and display cabinets... we want them to come in and be enthused by what they see... and become enthusiastic to get on with the projects.'*



Indeed by seeing reflections of one's work up on the walls a sense of personal worth is afforded, and a purpose in life instilled. Equally one can argue that the government have a clear sense of what the new teaching profession should look like and that they want to put it into practice. What is more, the BSF programme is also aimed at improving staffs' and pupils' welfare/wellbeing whilst at school by providing state of art facilities in a sustainable way. The purpose of this change is to improve staffs' and pupils' morale, as well as improve teachers' more professional community. As such, the new architectural design underlined by the BSF programme seeks to bring together the teacher's community for them to socialise with one another when not teaching. In the DfS (2002, p 18) the importance of how BSF may improve teachers' wellbeing is given:

*'Buildings embody the aspirations of schools for the future. They will be flexible and fully inclusive, and will offer a range of facilities to teachers in an environmentally-friendly way. All teaching areas will reflect the latest thinking on curriculum delivery, including sciences and sports. They could have additional specialist areas, such as for business studies, a cyber cafe or video conferencing. There will be all-weather social and recreational areas for the teachers' community, which we believe will improve their morale.'*

The significance of building a more social and recreational space for teachers is symbolic of a sense of value and investment. Lastly, the BSF programme intends to improve the security and privacy space for its staff and students. As such, there is a lot of emphasis placed on the importance of providing a secure building where staff are able to work at their own pace without any threat from outsiders. The DfES (2004, p 23) for example underlines the significance of security at schools:

*‘Security is a perennial concern, and should be designed into the solution and not retro-fitted... New buildings will offer a safe, secure, inclusive and comfortable environment to pupils, teachers and other users. ’*

In commenting on the importance of private space for staff, the government report shows that the BSF programme tackles the issue of the lack of the private space at old architecture design. The DfES (2004, pg. 3) emphasises that:

*‘Private space also contains both individual and collaborative work settings, but with a greater emphasis on exclusivity and confidentiality, with defined space boundaries and security. The BSF initiative delivers this effectively’*

To conclude, the above narrative analysis shows how identity and space may be moulded by policy-making at the national level. What is more, the above narrative analysis also indicates that the new changes implemented by government policy are driven through reflection upon the old buildings. For instance, they state that there exists a need to provide ‘state of art buildings’ suggesting that they reflect on their old buildings and believe that it is not adequate for the modern teaching approach. In these narratives it also appears that at the government policy there is an idealised space that teachers would like and benefit from. The next part of the analyses focuses on how identity and space is represented at the organisational level.

#### **5.4 Head teachers narratives of change**

The narratives of head teachers are also significant in framing the BSF initiative because they have been involved in bidding for this initiative and they have experienced that change in their schools. One can argue that there are several

potential resources managers can reflect on and they provide unique narratives compared to the narratives rooted in the BSF policy to appraise that story. Hence, the second part of this chapter scrutinises the local narratives that head teachers reflect on to uphold rational and clear (i.e. responsible and justifiable) explanation of change. In this section we explore the way that head teachers make use of BSF expressions and categories and more importantly how noticeable differences from stated BSF initiative goals are restructured in practical provisions.

During informal discussions with both head teachers it appears that these changes have been made to meet the demands of a modern teaching environment, and to endorse national policy. For instance, when the NC head teacher is asked about the reasoning of the current architectural changes, she replies:

*'I was personally involved in the process of the planning of this project. Our rationale behind these changes was to provide a working and learning environment for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as set out in the BSF programme. This is what this new and exciting building does.'*

During discussion with the head teacher at SEC one gleans similar outcomes. For example:

*'I am very excited with the outcome of this project. I was involved from start to finish, and I believe we have an outstanding learning and working environment. The new architectural space represents the transformation in education which was very much needed. Ofsted were critical of our previous building and our college was categorised as inadequate in terms of its*

*physical environment. In this new building, we have achieved that and I am very pleased about it.'*

In rationalising the new change at SEC, the head teacher makes a point of emphasising how the education sector has changed since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The head teacher argues that there has been an educational transformation and the BSF programme has fuelled that transformation. What is interesting here is that the head teacher justifies the planned change based on reflections upon the old building. In this discussion, the head teacher also comments on how the modern teaching approach has changed in the last decade and that there is a need for a flexible and adaptable physical environment to meet needs as set out by the BSF programme. In commenting on how the new building meets the demand of the modern teaching approach, he states:

*'The aim of this new and exciting building was to be able to cope with the uncertainty of future pedagogies. Innovation and quality are embraced, both in design and the management of education and teaching at this project. This is because this building provides outstanding ICT facilities and adaptable spaces for learning. It also offers a friendly and warm teaching and learning environment.'*

It appears that for this head teacher the adequate organisational space is important to cope with the uncertainty of the future pedagogies. One argues that this head teacher acknowledges that the teaching profession is constantly changing. In discussing the key changes that the new building brings about, both head teachers state the same reasons for change. The first key argument that comes across is that the new the

organisational space will remove the ‘unhealthy dichotomy’ and remove the ‘visible physical boundaries’ between the management team and teachers with an aim to improve communication. Again, what appears to happen here is that the managers reflect on the old building and idealise what the new building should be and have. In this way, their key focus is to provide open shared ‘hot-desking’ spaces with the aim to utilise communal spaces for dual purposes. In rationalising how the new building removes the physical boundaries between the management team and teachers, the head teacher at NC says:

*‘As you have noticed while being here this physical environment is unique in the sense that it provides a very open shared space for all staff to work and socialise together. My main focus here was to remove hierarchical physical boundaries between the management and teachers with the aim to remove the inflexible ideology. I believe that this building provides just that.’*

Thus, for this head teacher the social interaction and the ability to have an open shared working environment is crucial for the teaching profession. It suggests that the new organisational space will remove the ‘inflexible ideology’. To discover how the unhealthy dichotomy has been tackled in this college, one focuses on the hierarchal structure and how that is physically represented. During one’s observation at both schools it seems that the new physical changes with regards to removing hierarchical physical boundaries has not been translated like it was intended in the proposed space as dictated by national policy. During informal discussions with both head teachers, they said that they had to take into account other influences in making such changes and as they put it, it was not *‘that black and white’* and light a decision. Both head teachers claim that their deviation from the desired policy-making is a

*‘strategic decision’ and as a result, it slipped down on the agenda because of other bigger priorities. In their discussion they state that ‘when it came to such changes, we had other influences and structures that produced such conclusions and it was simply a strategic decision’.*

Similarly, in justifying the architectural changes at this college the SEC head teacher talks of how he tried to remove the ‘physical boundaries’ between the management team and teachers with a view to improving communication between staff, as set out at the BSF programme. In discussing how the new organisational space is organised in the new building, the head teacher states:

*‘The first change that was implemented here was the notion of hot-desking, which means that teachers operate in a more office-free way. As you might have noticed, we do not have a main staffroom here and there are only departmental staffrooms. Our focus here was to move away from the separation between management space and teachers’ space, as that is inefficient and creates unhealthy dichotomies. We have tried to move towards the notion that space is available for everyone and is as flexible as possible’.*

It is interesting to see how the head teachers emphasise the distinction between themselves as managers and teachers and that their main focus is to promote an ‘office-free way’ vision where teachers lose their communal staffroom to create that sense of togetherness. More importantly, it also appears that the physical changes implemented by the head teacher are based on the reflection of what it was like in the old building and making changes accordingly. In exploring on the notion of togetherness and providing a flexible space for everyone, the focus is awarded to

how that was physically represented in this college. From one's observational research it appears that the layout of space promotes two sub-groups, the management and teaching identities. The sub-group identities at both institutions are shown through their allocated physical space and place.

The new buildings layouts at SEC confirm the aforementioned because it maps out the staff's everyday location in the school and the physical distinction between the management team and teachers. From one's fieldwork observation, it seems that from the visitor's point of view it highlights the differences between the official ranks that matter while others do not. A prime example is the fact that teaching assistants do not have their own space to socialise in and as a result they claim the canteen area. It seems that this is a translation issue because in the BSF programme the intent is to remove such boundaries. In the planning proposal it states that the head teacher's focus is to improve communications between the management and the staff. The planned proposal of the new architecture design shows that teacher's professional development is not deemed to be important and they are expected to be controlled by the management.

In terms of the building physical design, both institutions provided an 'open shared' space for every employee in the college(s) to be treated as an equal; hence, they have the opportunity to share spaces equally around the college(s) and do not require a specific dedicated space. However, at the same time, the silent assumption in both institutions is the fact that the management team including the head teacher(s) and the staff involved in managing the college(s) do in fact have their private space. Conversely, teachers and teacher assistants have to share their space amongst their colleagues. This design thus makes a distinction in the way staff in the college(s) are

perceived and deemed to be. Such spatial separations/divisions serve as boundaries amongst the staff within the college(s) respectively. In discussing the rationale of such change, the head teacher of the college claims that because of the nature of one's job *'it is absolutely necessary to have this space to work in and I do not see anything wrong with it'*.

Again, it appears that the managers use space to create their own identity as non-teachers. One could argue that for the head teachers to have their own office it provides them with a sense of expectation. Also, is it not interesting to see how the manager narrates their distinction role between being a 'manager' and a 'teacher'. One could argue that the head teacher thinks that teachers do not need a private space to work in, whereas for the management team there it is 'absolutely necessary' to have that private space. Indeed, the head teacher views this change as acceptable and there should not be an issue about it.

What is more, the head teachers at both institutions have access to a large boardroom, space at their disposal that is hardly ever used however. When asking the SEC head teacher informally what the purpose of this space is, he claims that this is where the *'executive meetings take place'*. When asked to elaborate more on this point his response was that *'this is the place where we make some crucial decisions about this institution.'* This would suggest that he has the duty to look after teachers and make decisions that would impact their profession and that he is entitled to have a private and an elite space at that, to do so. One could argue that the head teacher utilises his own space to uphold his in-group (managerial) identity profession.



Again, here we have an issue of how policies have been translated in the physical design and the way it has affected teacher's professional role. In scrutinising the proposed planning design, one notes how decision makers may have other external influences to take into account. For instance, local variations and strategic priorities need attending to, and as such teachers needs have seemingly slipped down the agenda in terms of priority. Such changes show that there is an issue of how effectively national policies have filtered down to the organisational level. At the national level of policy-making the government has intended to remove the *'unhealthy dichotomy'* between the management team and teachers. However, in looking at the proposed space at the organisational level, there seem to be other strategic decisions at stake

Discussions with head teachers at both institutions and the planned space document shows great emphasis on the importance of technology. In these discussions one notes that both head teachers seek to promote the use of technology at their schools. This is because as described in the proposal of both institutions, the use of technology is linked with the pedagogical change. In this way, the teaching policies and organisational space can be designed with ICT to meet the modern teaching approach as set out by the government. In doing so, both schools promote a personalised, individualised, innovative, and flexible learning approach. This issue was touched upon by national level policy and was kept at the organisational level. As such, this involves the use of technology throughout schools. In the discussion with the NC head teacher, it is conveyed:

*'This college was built with modern technology in mind, to facilitate teaching and learning. We have moved into a world where this college has a specialist*

*curriculum area, and excellence at its heart and throughout all its activities; where this college improves the professional development of teachers and provides new and exciting opportunities for young pupils; where ICT is integral to modern teaching and learning, not a bolt-on; where out-of-hours teaching and learning becomes a more important part of everyday college life, with all facilities being shared between teachers; where a first-class working environment is a reality for all teachers and support staff.'*

A key aim therefore is to incorporate ICT in a way to facilitate learning and to allow students to reap new opportunities and teachers to develop as a profession. Thirdly, from discussions with both head teachers at both institutions, in conjunction with stipulated policy, the aesthetics of the college claim particular significance. As such, both head teachers claim that the purpose of the new built architectural space is to represent a welcoming and pleasing environment for its staff. They want to provide an environment where teachers are proud of their space and that the building provides state of art facilities. Similar claims are made in the planned document (hard copy planning document provided by the head teacher). In discussing how the new organisational space provides an aesthetically pleasing environment the NC head teacher states:

*'This college provides outstanding facilities for the staff. We offer state-of-the-art facilities and more importantly, a friendly environment for the staff and pupils. Teachers have outstanding facilities to socialise and work in and we are lucky to have such an outstanding teaching and working environment'.*

A key issue that transpires from the above quote is the need for teachers to collaborate in a more sociable time, user-friendly for both students and teachers alike. Equally, the SEC head teacher in talking about the importance of an outstanding teaching environment states:

*'In this new college we offer a pleasant environment to teach and learn. We know this from the rundown old building that we had. It was not a pleasant place to teach in. We are lucky to now have outstanding facilities for the staff and pupils. We built this environment with the aim of improving teachers' wellbeing, and we hope we have achieved that. Resources around the college are available for everyone and they are outstanding.'*

The interesting narrative that can be drawn out from the above quote is that it appears that the management team, here, being the head teachers, have an idealised expectation of what teaching environment should look like. The narratives at national level policy conveys that the head teacher along with teachers decide what it is important to have in their new building. In this quote the head teacher is using the word 'We' interchangeably to reflect back on the old building and how the new building has changed and improved the teaching environment, and also it suggests that he is making a distinction between the management and teachers' profession. For him, it appears that the management team are responsible to make executive decision to improve teachers' and students' teaching environment.

Lastly, in discussing new changes at both institutions both head teachers talk about the importance of security and privacy at the workplace. In their discussions, they compare the new building with the old one. They believe that teachers should have

the freedom to teach without any harassment from outsiders, and have their own privacy in order to work with autonomy. The core belief held is that this serves to improve teachers' experience of comparability and support at their workplace, which is deemed to be important for their profession. In supporting this change the NC head teacher states:

*'Unlike the old building, this new building provides a secure and a safe environment for teachers to teach. Teachers need privacy to do their own work and the new building provides just that'.*

From this quote it would suggest that one of their rationale changes was based on providing a safe environment for their staff. They narrate that the new building provides that and also deem that now teachers have their privacy to do their work. Equally, the SEC head teacher in discussing how the new building provides security and privacy for the staff states:

*'This state-of-the-art building is more than just a building. As well as providing outstanding facilities, this building provides a secure environment for its staff. In the past we have had incidents where outsiders have come into the college and threatened our staff. In this building, we have high security and no one without ID can enter the building. We believe this change was needed for the profession. Teachers should be able to teach without fear and this is what we offer here. At the same time teachers can work on their own and have their own privacy without being interfered by others. They have their own laptop that they can use throughout the college in their own time.'*

Thus, it suggests that the head teacher at SEC believes that the new organisational space has outstanding facilities and that it provides a very secure environment for the staff. What is interesting here is that the head teacher believes that he has arranged the new organisational space to respond to the need for the teacher's profession. He reflects back on the incidents that occurred at the college to justify the reasons for change. Again, we notice him stating '*we believe*' and '*we offer*' which would suggest that there is an agreed view amongst the management team that this change was needed to protect teachers and their profession.

From observations at NC it is apparent that privacy is deemed to be important in the planned space and for the management. The issue of security relates to the notions of accessibility and being free from threat from outsiders. What is interesting to point out from this narrative is that during the discussion with head teachers they constantly make a distinction between themselves as being a manager and teachers. It appears that the head teachers feel like they know what teachers need and want and they are making changes accordingly. Also, what has been constant in the discussion with both head teachers is that in justifying their change they repetitively reflect back on the past experiences and the incidents and experiences that they had at the old buildings. Such reflection would suggest that plays an important role when there is a physical change at workplace which has an impact on someone's profession and their sense of continuity.

## **5.5 Chapter summary**

First and foremost, the findings from this chapter indicate that narratives are complex, situational and multifaceted. This chapter, drawing on Lefebvre's thinking,

has explored managerial narratives, focusing on the narratives of conceived space expressed by the policy makers and on the planned spaces narrated by managers, in this case, the head teachers. It has explored the rationale behind the introduction of the BSF initiative and its expressed narratives towards change. For instance we explored how the narratives of the BSF initiative aimed at improving the new teaching method and how the new organisational space will improve teacher's professional morale, hence their sense of self. The findings suggest that professional morale is directly equivalent to the teacher's sense of self. Equally, we also explored how head teachers' narratives were translated at the organisational level. The focus on the policy narratives has been conducted to explore government intentions with the aim of discovering the nature of narratives used to justify their rationale for change. The purpose of exploring the narratives of the managers was to explore how they justify their planned changes that took place at their institutions. From the analysis one main conclusion that can be drawn out is that there is an interaction between two narratives at national level policy and at managerial level.

The key intertwined narratives that came across were that of reflection and change. From the national level policy the narrative reflection of what was needed to change was enabled by reflecting back on the old building. In the narratives government policies reveal how the old building was not fit for purpose; namely that of reflecting a new modern teaching approach. For instance, the narratives show how the new building will offer flexibility for the use of technology, independent learning, innovation and will provide a welcoming environment to work in. As they put it, there is an *'ambition for a learner-led, personalised, flexible, innovative, removing*

*unhealthy dichotomies, no boundaries, education philosophy, is represented and fulfilled through the new architectural space design.'*

Similarly, in terms of the planned space narrated by the head teachers it appears that when they discuss why they changed the buildings they reflect back on the previous experiences at the old buildings. Therefore, it would appear that change and reflection is central to the narratives conveyed. Lastly, from these narratives it appeared that both the government and policy by head teachers had portrayed an idealised space in their mind. In other words, they had a vision of what was needed to change to reflect the new modern teaching approach. Therefore, it will be interesting to analyse how these narratives are reflected by teachers, and to explore what narratives they give from the pedagogy perspective.

## **Chapter 6: Narratives of pedagogy and work: How teachers' work is anchored in space**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter focus is given to narratives of pedagogy and work. The focus is based on how teachers' work is anchored in space. This chapter starts by providing an overview of the narratives of what it means to be a teacher. Through Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space this chapter focuses on perceived and lived space as narrated by teachers concerning how space and the new modern teaching approach has changed the profession, with the intention of exploring what teachers have to say about the way their profession is advancing. In particular I examine teachers' narratives of reflections and arrangements of social relations to unearth how they form and transform new professional roles in response to spatial change. Evett (2006) shows that occupational professionalism is based on the notion that within a particular professional group there is a mutual authority which incorporates trust between the manager and employee as well as employee and consumer. This is a useful concept here because it helps us make sense of teachers' narratives with regards to change in space and it enables us to explore how it forms or hinders their occupational identity. It also furthers the discussion on how protective of their profession they are and how they act upon the physical changes at their workplace.

### **6.2 What does it mean to be a teacher?**

From informal discussions conducted at both institutions it appears that whenever teachers discuss their profession they take pride in it and in essence they seem very proud and protective of their profession. For instance, during one's field work one



notes teachers stating, *'This is a specialist profession and I am proud to be part of it....we educate society'*. It seems such a profession imparts a sense of wider social responsibility. This similar narrative came from the semi-structured interviews.

For example, a sociology teacher says:

*'I'm really proud of being a teacher. I don't feel like it's a second class profession. I think it is very challenging and it has its perks. It's very intensive and more challenging than some other professions. We educate leaders in the society. I'm proud to be a teacher'*

From this narrative it is arguable that this teacher is claiming this is a very demanding profession and requires a lot of hard work but at the same time is very 'proud' of being a teacher. One notices that this teacher stating that *'I do not feel like it's a second class profession'* which suggests that they are important in the society because they educate the society and not everyone can do that. It suggests that they believe that they have domination power in the society in the sense they educate leaders in the society. Thus, one can argue that the nature of this profession is based on providing knowledge to the society and that is an essential component within the workplace, particularly in the relation to signal jurisdictional control to other groups of others.

To set the scene, it is vital to note that teachers strive for accomplishing self-understanding via teaching, and this aligns with those of their co-workers and colleagues. Their occupational identity emerges at the interaction of the profession and the work background. Through informal discussions with teachers along with observing the social relations of how they interact with each other it appears that

teachers believe that their profession is about being with people and learning from each other. For instance, from informal discussions held with a mathematics teacher he states:

*‘Being a teacher is about coordinating and interacting with each other and more importantly sharing our ideas and concerns that we might have’.*

Further to this, drawing out narratives from informal discussions held with teachers at both institutions it appears that teachers value close relationships with their colleagues. As one teacher puts it,

*‘I love talking and sharing ideas with my work colleagues. They are full of bright and creative ideas. We value each other’s opinions. We help and support each other and we are also always available and happy to help our pupils.’*

From this narrative one can argue that teachers view teaching more than just teaching in the classroom environment but also being there to support their working colleagues, as well as supporting their pupils by being there for them.

Also, one notes that teachers’ occupational identity is not entirely shaped by teacher training; rather it materialises more progressively from the foundation of their enmeshed and actual occupational conditions. This notion comes across during interviews when teachers discuss their professional role. For instance, an English teacher at NC expresses:

*‘Being a teacher is about learning as you go along.... teaching is a difficult job and a lot of it is about the experience of doing the job...’*

To encapsulate, the general perception of the formation of occupational identity is based on the importance of collective/community gathering, interaction and proximity with other teachers. It appears that all these activities take place in space and that space plays an important role in forming occupational identity. Below these key issues are appraised in greater detail for why they are important for teachers, and how the use of space at each institution has enabled and/or hindered these factors of influence.

### **6.3 Key changes in the profession**

From informal discussions held at both institutions as well as from the interviews with teachers, it appears that teachers feel that there have been significant changes in the profession. Their narratives include that of shifting from '*chalk and talk*' to being more like a '*facilitator*' in order to promote independent learning. To illustrate:

*'Now it's all about encouraging students to take the lead, be independent, autonomous, discover learning. The teacher's job is to facilitate rather than to provide all the answers.'*

*'We are now taught that we need to provide independent learning, be flexible, it's kind of being a facilitator like in the university. I am not sure whether that is a good thing but I suppose this reflects the new government's policies and we [teachers] have to follow that.'*

Although the modern teaching approach as a concept has not been a concept many of the teachers are familiar with, these narratives do serve to convey that this teacher appreciates how the concept of the new modern teaching approach as set out by

government will operate. It appears that government policy has been driven to introduce change to the teaching profession; namely, one shifting away from the ‘*chalk and talk*’ approach to teaching to that of being a ‘*facilitator*’. This new role for teachers to accept is that of being a facilitator only; privileges as a professional are drying up. This change in occupational identity is seemingly ‘dictated by government’.

Additionally, this new role is seen to rely on ICT to facilitate independent learning, as well as shift greater accountability for learning on the student. Shifting from a spoon feeding conventionality, the modern teaching approach needs to be captured from the teachers’ perspective. For example, to grasp the notion of modern teaching:

*‘That of course includes IT skills and the emphasis we placed in recent times on e-learning. I understand we’re going towards a relatively paper free environment.’*

It is interesting to notice that this teacher believes that now they are going to rely more on IT skills because they are going towards ‘a relatively paper free environment’. One can argue that teachers are recognising that their profession is changing by relying more on the technology. Indeed, to engage a more modern approach to teaching, teachers’ identities are seemingly in a state of flux. This flux for some is attributed to hierarchical levels of decision-making, which may not always take the teacher’s perspective into account. To illustrate:

*‘It is constant change but I am aware of why it does change. When the government comes into power, they want to be seen to be making a difference and they will tamper with things they still have control over, like the NHS.’*

*But what is really frustrating being in education, is how you get somebody with such a strong agenda with what they think, and they say this is what we are going to do, and they do not take into consideration teachers' feelings and reactions.'*

For this teacher, the key change that has happened within their teaching profession is that driven through government policy. This teacher also makes a distinction between 'us and them' by referring to the government as 'they' and that the perception is that the government are constantly changing their profession and that they want to control teachers' profession in which they find it 'frustrating'. This distinction also transpires when appraising the theme of managerial narratives to suggest there exists a sense of in-group identity across teachers. It seems change causes frustration for teachers as teachers feel like they are being undervalued are possibly losing their jurisdictional control in their profession.

More importantly, teachers recognise and understand changes in their profession by reflecting back on how physical space has been redesigned to reflect such changes. In other words, teachers reflect on how change in their profession is driven through physical spatial changes. They reflect on how changes in the physical space transform their professionalism. In evaluating the changes at their new building in terms of professional practices, teachers reflect on how change relates to the new notion of the modern teaching approach. As space that is lived in has changed for delivering professional practice, teachers have sought to adopt new daily practices. Indeed it appears that teachers at both institutions uphold the value of social interaction in the face of new spatial change. Nevertheless, as one teacher from SEC notes, national level and organisational level policies may seemingly reflect the

modern teaching approach; however, policies still need to be approved by the teachers themselves. To illustrate:

*'I think to a certain degree yes, but the key thing is how far it's embraced. Because even though teaching has changed, it has advanced; some teachers haven't. I guess it also depends on flexibility. As students change, as things change, teachers need to change as well.'*

It is interesting to see how this teacher recognises the profession is changing. In contrast with the managerial narratives, it appears that teachers do not share the same view in matters of change. From the managerial narratives it seemed that teachers had an input in the change, yet this is not the same view held from appraising the teachers' narratives. Part of the change lies in adapting to the changes to pedagogy via new innovations as set out by national policy. As one teacher notes:

*'We're dictated to by what the government wants us to do, so when the government changes and the policies change, we have to adapt. It will still be time consuming and hard work, but I think we'll get the support that we need.'*

This teacher remains optimistic that support will be at hand, in spite of change and its unpredictable pace. A current change to pay heed to, and a change as directed by national policy, is that of openness, accessibility, and teachers facilitating at all times. Again, it appears that this teacher feels like these changes have been imposed upon them by the government and the management team. For instance, one notes this teacher stating *'we are dedicated to what the government want us to do.... We'll have to adapt to it'*. This view differs from the narratives that we discussed in the

managerial narratives because such narratives posit teachers had input in the change. In appraising the motives for change, one teacher notes:

*'I think because of the openness, it's directed towards encouraging a client-centred approach, making the communication between teachers and students more open, encouraging interaction, not being locked away.'*

From the above narratives it appears that this teacher is aware of the current change and acknowledges that believes that they are encouraged to be approachable to students. Unlike what was suggested in the managerial narratives where it was claimed that the new organisational space was designed to remove the 'unhealthy dichotomy' between teachers and staff; this teacher views the design of the organisational space as a way of improving communication between teachers and students. Ironically, however, in terms of social interaction spanning teachers of different faculties very little opportunity exists for comparable forms of open interaction and communication. On the contrary, departments are closed off from one another, and communications are highly impersonal. To illustrate this observation, one teacher from SEC states:

*'In a college of this size, it shouldn't be too difficult to provide opportunities for more dialogue, but without those common spaces it can be quite hard for collaboration to take place.'*

The above narrative suggests that this teacher is not convinced that the new organisational space has not improved the opportunity for collaboration and dialogue with other staff. For this teacher the design of the new organisational space it is not designed to reflect teacher's needs which is to provide a better collaboration amongst

staff. This is contradictory to what was narrated in the managerial narratives. What is interesting, however, is that policy-making for furthering the modern day pursuit of pedagogy for some teachers falls short of what may be considered ‘best practice’.

One teacher declares:

*I think they're [policies] constantly conflicting with developments and pedagogical research. They pick out the areas that they want to pick out and ignore all the bits that are politically distasteful. They're after their own ends but that's politics for you. The modern teacher does have to reflect current teaching policies; they have to follow the national standards. Because we are so obsessed with Ofsted inspections, we are conforming to expectations laid down by the government through the Ofsted structure. That is what we do and what we conform to. Yes, of course we have to, but I think my answer was that the politics that inform those observations are sometimes healthy, sometimes based on good, founded research, but they are selective.*

The above narrative suggests that this teachers reflect on what they are expected of them in their new teaching profession. For this teacher Ofsted inspections play an important role in forming teacher's profession and that is because this teacher believes that they need to conform to set expectations set to them. For this teacher, unlike what was suggested in the managerial narratives that the new organisational space was designed to reflect teacher's needs; the changes in their profession is driven through the external pressures which it is deemed not to reflect teacher's needs. In playing the role of ‘facilitator’ teachers are seemingly more freed up to manage such added responsibility. However, as one teacher notes, favoured policies may be out of sync with trends of the current day. To illustrate:



*'I think policies tend to lag behind current trends. That is quite often due to the management and the actual staff on the ground not communicating well with each other. It quite often takes one lucky instance when they actually do cooperate and that doesn't happen very often. Too often you find that management don't actually understand teaching, so I think it will always be lagging behind.'*

One can argue that this teacher believes that the management team, including head teachers, do not communicate effectively with teachers and that therefore they do not have a clear understanding of the teaching profession and that is why policies are 'lagging behind' the current trend. In exploring narratives, it appears that the new role of teaching needs to take heed of a teacher's characteristics, to see if they are conducive to being a 'facilitator' in a 'modern teaching environment'. To elaborate on this, the following narrative is significant:

*'I've worked with some people who are teachers and to be fair, I don't think they've got the right set of skills or have reached a point where they've tried it, they've been here for 2–3 years and they aren't adaptable or flexible enough to work in the modern teaching environment. I think for me, adaptability and flexibility are at the heart of what you expect from a good teacher.'*

As can be seen from the above excerpt, some teachers would believe that not all staff are able to adapt to the call for a modern teaching environment. Thus, contrary to the behaviourist tact towards new organisational learning as set out by national policy, a distinctive skills set is argued. The key point here is that not everyone possesses such

qualities and being a ‘good teacher’ may indeed be personality-driven. To illustrate, appraisals of the characteristics that teachers need to have at their disposal are as follows:

*‘I think there are certain personal qualities. Flexibility, adaptability, emotional resilience are key and to be fair they’re qualities that teachers have always required.’*

*‘I think for me, adaptability and flexibility are at the heart of what you expect from a good teacher. If you can’t be adaptable and you can’t change, then I think it’s time for another job.’*

Hence, as the above excerpts portray, flexibility and adaptability are quintessential characteristics for working in the modern teaching environment. Similarly, emotional resilience is called for, which too may not be subject to behavioural models of organisational learning. What also is called for is the ability to change, and some people just cannot embrace change, even if the world around them is changing. Just as in the teaching profession, change apparent in the delivery and facilitation of learning is being fuelled by innovations in technology as will be discussed later on. There are some disciplines that embrace such change quite well; there are others that do not.

#### **6.4 Change and perceived space**

For teachers, pedagogy has seen many innovations and this is apparent via changes in spatial domain. During research held at both institutions it appears that teachers have held high expectations of their new working environment. In giving their

account, teachers sought to compare the existing/actual space with their imaginary one. For instance, as highlighted earlier on, there were a handful of teachers who were partly influenced to work in these institutions because of the new organisational space. For instance, whilst in dialogue with a new recruit teacher at SEC he states that:

*'I had extremely high expectations as to the layout and friendly spaces at this college. That was one of my main motivations for applying for this position'.*

It is interesting to notice that for this teacher the physical layout of the building was one of the main factors for applying for this position. It suggests that this teacher has an idealised image of what the teaching environment should look like and they make decision on whether to work for that particular organisation based on that. This suggests that space plays an important role in the pedagogy profession. Similarly, at the NC, in dialogue with some of the new recruits as to why they choose to work at NC and not elsewhere in the area, one teacher explains:

*'I was privileged to have had a chance to work in this outstanding working environment. From the external perspective everyone, family and friends, say how lucky I am to be here and this makes me to be proud to be a teacher here'.*

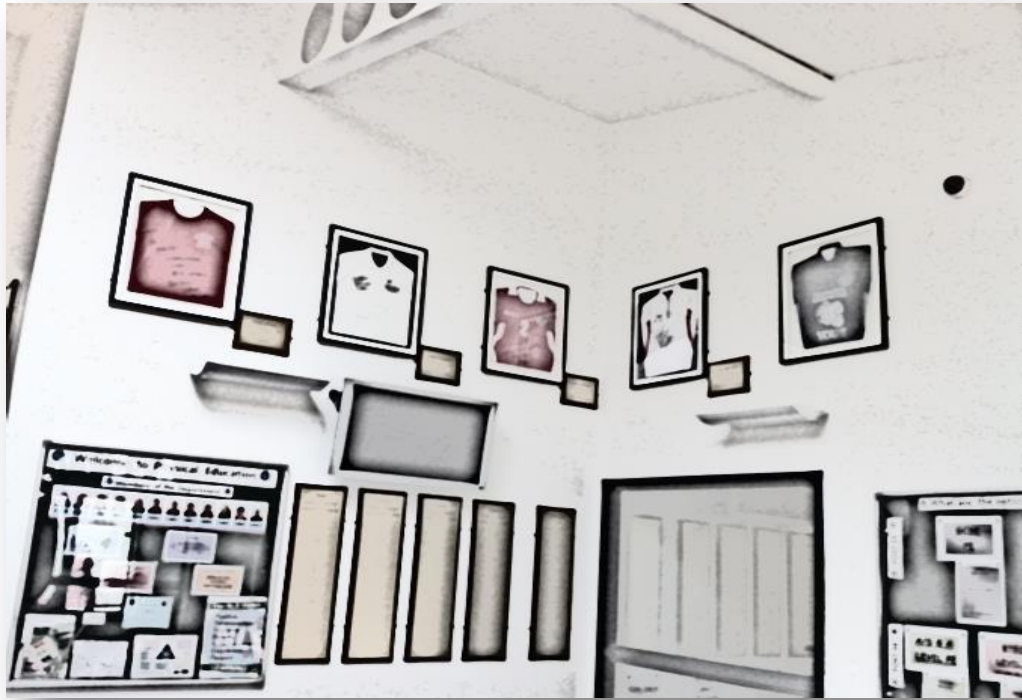
From the above narrative one can argue that teachers have an idealised teaching environment that represents their profession that is crucial for them. For instance, this teacher classifies the current building as 'outstanding' which suggests that it meets this teacher's expectations. Also, for this teacher the teaching environment

forms the external perception of the institution which it appears to be important for this teacher. It makes this teacher 'proud' to be associated with the college.

For teachers, the building plays an important role in renegotiating their professional identity and renegotiating both personal and public opinion. An interesting quote comes from an English teacher because this teacher reflects back to the old building in expressing his pride of being in his current work environment.

*'From the aesthetics point of view from the outside, I think it looks like a fantastic place to work and I am very proud of this place. The building before was a mismatch of 1970's and 1950's structures. I think now it's a great space from the outside. It's got a lot of teething troubles as talked about it before, but it looks like a college now. It's really nice and bright and clean...'*

One teacher in the PE department at NC, for example, making reference to two pictures as shown in **Figures 1 and 2** below, discusses the way expectations confirmed to reform his sense of self due to the new organisational space at his disposal.



**Figure 1 PE teacher talking about the new building**



**Figure 2 PE teacher talking about the new building**

In discussing the ways the new organisational space has been translated to act in a way that renegotiates his sense of self the teacher makes reference to the pictures

shown directly above. In elaborating on why he took these two pictures he states how he is keen to show that he now has outstanding facilities in his department and that the department is given the ‘*personal touch*’ starting from its main entrance by displaying signed shirts from sport athletes and by placing students’ work on the notice board. In an interview he states:

*‘I like our department, I like the positioning. I like the sports centre, the fact that we are a centre and not just an additional classroom hidden away at the end of the corridor. It’s a double floor building, but we’ve got some lovely facilities that are spread out. They’re not thrown on top of each other. Because of the space, light and our positioning, it makes it quite a friendly and relaxed area to come to, as shown in the picture...in this picture you see that we have displayed signed shirts from sport athletes. Such a design makes it like a sport faculty building.... in the old building we were placed in a dark place and it was not a pleasant place to be honest. The other picture just shows the modern space available for our students and it is a pleasant space to utilise’.*

Engaging acts of reflection such narratives help to tease out how spatial design, pleasing aesthetics, and a personalised environment come together to exude an air of welcome apparent more so in the non-physical domain. In other words such characteristics are deemed to be important for the formation of the pedagogy. Indeed, a change in the organisational space transforms not only the physical space occupied by people, but also the non-physical space - especially pertaining to the thoughts and feelings people have about their place of work and of themselves. Such thoughts and feelings form teachers’ sense of self, as the physical space lived in reflects back

perceptions of value and self-worth. The narrative tells of how a change in space has served to ease teachers' daily professional practices.

Likewise, a RE teacher who has been working for over 10 years at this institution states:

*'I'm very proud to say I'm part of NC. It's an amazing aesthetically presented building, an amazing school. I quite like the fact that every time I drive in I drive through country roads and that's just a lovely experience. Having worked in a city school as well, the drive to work is totally different. It's a breath of fresh air...'*

From the above quote it feels that this teacher feels a sense of pride and appreciation for the new space they are privy to. This teacher implies that this is a calm environment which seems to be crucial for teacher's profession. It appears that the physical space inspires teachers to associate themselves with the building and the institution, respectively.

Similar narratives also appeared during one's fieldwork. During informal discussions held, teachers constantly broach the topic of how proud they are of their new institution. They appear to be pleased with the fact that they work there and that the new facilities have made their teaching experience much easier to manage. It appears that the organisational space gives them a sense of self as a professional teacher. For instance, during informal discussions, words, such as *'proud of this building'* *lucky to work here'* *'unlike the old building this place provides exceptional teaching and learning environment'* came up over and over again. Arguably, the new

organisational space also provides teachers with the feeling of being valued, if not a sense of belonging.

Teachers also narrated that the new organisational space has had a significant in them and students renegotiating personal opinion of self. For example, one teacher from SEC commented,

*‘Generally, I think the main building is architecturally very good in terms of creating space where students can assemble and feel cosy. That makes me feel good because I get a sense that students are enjoying themselves. This is important for me as a teacher, because it makes me feel like I have achieved something.’*

Moreover, teachers reflect on their experiences of the old building to discuss how the new building has changed students’ attitudes towards learning and behaviour. In drawing comparisons with the new building, the change in the spatial environment not only seems to inspire a sense of pride, but also instils a sense of purpose. To illustrate:

*‘I met a few of my last year’s year 13s who came back. They were commenting on the resources we have here and they were saying you’ve got better resources here that they had at the university they went to. That made me feel really proud to be associated with the college. I thought that was £40 million well spent just for that single comment. They realised the value in this building.’*



*'I think since we moved in July 2011, the resource areas have made a big difference to the way that students interact with each other and teachers...there seems to be a much more purposeful feeling in the building. People actually want to work.'*

From the above narratives one can argue that teachers value the importance of a good working environment because it makes them proud of their profession. It appears that teachers are emotionally attached with their profession and that they value when students have something positive thing to say about their learning environment. The following excerpt exudes a similar theme to the above featured quotes, yet is essentially a teacher's reflection of who they are, and what matters to them when forming an identity.

*'I'm really proud of my students and to get that recognition and achievement at the end of the course is kind of what makes you keep going. It's very much part of who I am and I can't imagine not doing it.'*

In exploring teacher's narratives it appears that in forming and re-forming one's identity, self-esteem and sense of worth, the external perception of the school and its building is insightful too. In a similar vein, teachers tended to reflect back on the physical appearance and the design of the old building by stating that they did not look forward to working there. To illustrate:

*My first 6 months working here were working in a 1930's grammar school building that was literally falling apart. That wasn't a place I looked forward to going to work in. There were days where I was in the cramped office at*

*the end of the corridor and it was quite depressing. I didn't feel very proud being a teacher at SEC.'*

One can argue that this narrative suggests that for this teacher the physical appearance and the design of the building were not satisfactory for their professional role. It appeared that teachers recognised the lack of space allocated to them and this seemed to be important for their professional role. For instance, we notice this teacher stating that *'there we days where I was in the cramped office'* which suggests that for teachers the availability of their office space is also critical for them as professionals. It appears that teachers are attached to their teaching physical environment and that they are very proud and protective of their profession.

Equally, often people see themselves through the eyes of others, and this perspective seemingly contributes to a formation of identity. To illustrate:

*'Being in this position has implications in how you interact with your friends and families.'*

Thus, in light of the above, it is only natural to ponder how teachers feel outsiders perceive the new school buildings and facilities, and if has a bearing on their occupational preferences. To illustrate:

*'I do think having a new building has made everybody feel proud of the college. People like parents and prospective students, come here to look at the college, and they're impressed by the facilities. It is a good feeling and makes you feel proud as you can say "come to our college, we've got these amazing facilities." '*

The assumed perception of the building tells of a vision believed as upheld by those on the outside. From the above narrative one can claim that space provides a sense of continuity for employees and this is a good indication where this teacher says ‘come to our college’. This is because this teacher associates himself with the college and is proud of it and tries to promote it to potential students. The above findings suggest that changes in the organisational space reposition teachers’ opinion of self, which at times may be observed through the eyes of significant others. In terms of assumed public opinion, teachers relish in the symbolic value of space by feeling proud and motivated.

Despite the fact that they felt proud of their profession for them it seems that the new organisational space has caused tension between themselves and how they are viewed by externals. For them, space represents prospects for a public opinion of teachers. For instance, in an interview, a sociology teacher at SEC:

*‘Unfortunately we live in a society where we assume that teachers have it pretty easy. They [teachers] don’t work long hours, have long holidays and have a brand new building. The new physical space has certainly promoted that notion.... people ignore the fact that we have to work long hours and during weekends.... yes the building looks great, I give you that... but it is not practical and we have to change the way we work....’*

Thus although some assume feelings of pride from being a teacher, others feel misunderstood, underestimated and undervalued. Moreover, although the design of the new spatial domains are understood as impressive some feel that teachers have it easy and teachers did not appreciate that general view that is about the teaching

profession. This is another example explaining how teachers are very protective of their profession and how they feel unease about change and the outside perception about their profession. They believe that the new organisational space has played a vital role in forming that perception and seemed to be protective of their profession.

Thus far we have explored that not everyone can be a teacher and that it is a 'special profession' and teachers were proud and protective of their profession. Moreover, we have also explored how the teaching profession has changed from being 'chalk and talk' to being a facilitator and how space has contributed to that change in their profession. With this in mind, now we draw attention to teachers' narratives about technology with the aim to explore how technology has affected their profession.

## **6.5 Narratives of conceived and perceived space: effects of technology in profession**

Space here is reflected upon as a contributory condition for whether learning and inspiration can effectively take place. Technology features as a key improvement that virtually all teachers have commented on. Although technology is considered as a significant external force of change, its incorporation in the pedagogical domain is apparent as ICT exists as a feature of organisational space. This is especially poignant considering how the use of technology has changed teachers' material existence and has formed the way teachers plan and deliver their lessons. Without such incorporation of technology, engendering the modern teaching approach is somewhat infeasible, particularly in terms of successfully facilitating knowledge to students.

From the managerial narratives we noticed that building spaces conducive to engaging a modern teaching environment constitutes a core building block of national policy-making. Technological innovation is a core driver of change and sustainability. Hence, staying in line with the times calls for engaging students via technology and ICT. As all young people may not be able to access such innovative facilitation in their home environment the school environment may be the only place that can truly prepare young people for the changing IT-driven domain of the working environment.

For teachers the introduction of the technology at the new building by the management team was understood as promoting the independent learning. To illustrate:

*'I think we have to leave it up to them to encourage independent learning. I would say if that's the concept of modern teaching, I would be all for it. But, I think it has to be reliant on systems and internet capacities that work.'*

From this narrative one can argue that for this teacher the independent learning is a positive change in their profession but also believes that there should be an appropriate system for that concept to be implemented. Such is the realisation of the future of teaching.

In discussing the importance of technology in the teaching profession, teachers had two contradictory views on it. For some, technology is important, whereas for others it is not. To illustrate, although new technology quite effectively eases the way in which teachers can communicate with their students, their fellow colleagues and for delivering their teaching, the acceptance of the technology seemingly varies across

disciplines. In some subjects including business studies and creative media, technology plays an incredibly important role in the facilitation of teaching. To illustrate:

*‘There’s a lot of technology that helps us and makes life easier for our subjects and we rely heavily on it’. I think partly the technology we have fits towards that.’*

It appears that for this teacher technology is an important change of their profession and they make use of it. However, in subjects such as English, teachers view technology as a hindrance. To illustrate:

*‘On top of this I think it will be much more focused on technology and I am not sure whether it is a good thing for subjects like English’*

Thus in spite of recognising the force of external change as imposed by technology, some teachers are seemingly set in their ways, and may indeed be aware and cautious of the change. Nevertheless, for most, the use of technology in lessons is noted for its benefits. To illustrate:

*‘I think you’ve got to try and keep ahead of technology. I think a lot of it is that you’ve got to be aware of what’s happening out there. Students very quickly get into things like Facebook, twitter, all the new social media that’s available to them. We should be aware of it and the opportunities for us but we also need to be aware of potential risks. Sometimes we can’t react as quickly as the market place might do.’*

From this narrative one can argue that finding the right time for the introduction and or change is of the essence of the introduction of the technology. A time lag in responding to the marketplace is seemed vital for this teacher for this to work. Thus from the above-given perspective, technology is seen as highly significant. Technology, has also eased teachers' daily professional practices. For instance, in discussion with teachers at SEC one notes that teachers frequently post feedback on student's assignments through 'moodle'. Feedback through 'moodle' can be accessed from home as this is an intranet used by students and teachers at SEC. Thanks to the new laptops teachers exchange e-mails with their colleagues, thus they did not have to go and see them face to face. This invariably saves a lot of time, especially time that they do not have.

In reflecting upon the ease in professional practice afforded by technology, and its importance to the profession as a whole, the following excerpt is of use:

*'To teach Business Studies effectively at this college, it is important that we have modern technology and that is exactly what we have. We are lucky to have this. I think this has eased the way I teach and students can have a look at their feedback from home. Whether we like it or not, technology is crucial in our teaching.'*

Similar stories are shared by teachers at NC. Teachers there are heavily reliant on the use of technology. This is certainly the case for Media Studies teachers. Teachers at Media faculty had Apple computers to meet the demand of the current market that students are faced with. In showing the importance of technology in an interview one teacher states:

*We are lucky to have the up to date technology and I know that other schools do not have what we got. Having this modern technology enables me to deliver my lesson effectively.'*

Innovative progress is apparent as teachers affirm how fortunate they are to have the facilitation of modern technology at their fingertips to deliver the modern teaching approach.

On the other hand, for teachers, technology such as smart phones is readily available to students to allow them to access expert knowledge at the touch of a button. Such change in the facilitation and accessibility of knowledge could be viewed as a threat to a teacher's occupational identity. It appears that although teachers claim that technology assists them with their teaching flexibility, it also restricts them in terms of the ways in which they can deliver their lessons. During observations at the SEC it appears some teachers are restricted by technology. Still they are encouraged to make use of technology. Teachers, however, believe that technology is changing the mode of teaching. To illustrate general consensus,

*'Although the technology helps me to deliver the lessons effectively, it fails to get student's attention in the classroom and this is very frustrating for us'.*

From this narrative, one can argue that the introduction of technology frustrates this teacher because students are not engaged in the classroom. Reinforcing this issue, during the interview with teachers at this college, they express the challenges of technology by stating:



*'Now we are a college who wants to use modern technology and laptops and things, but we have not been able to overcome the health and safety hazards or get students' attention. It makes it difficult to teach, as movement is restricted and access to the students is not great due to the wires... there are other complications which they should have addressed when they did it and one of them is to grab students' attention'*

Again, this is another example, where a teacher claims that technology is making it difficult for them to grab student's attention. In the same way, at NC, teachers express their negative feelings towards the extensive use of technology. Some teachers complain about the new concept of independent learning, reinforced by the use of technology. For instance, a social sciences teacher states:

*'At the moment the technology is not quite there and there are a lot of restrictions. Students can't just go on a website, as it's blocked. There are reasons for that, but ultimately I think technology affects learning in one way or another, as it restricts us [teachers] in the way we deliver our lessons'*

A common complaint of technology is that it is merely virtual in reality, and does little to propagate social interaction as apparent with more face-to-face communicate. Indeed technology can isolate people in a bubble, which leads onto another key narrative drawn from the data; namely, that of an atmosphere lacking more congenial relations in response to change via reflections of feeling isolated (this aspect will be elaborated in the collegiality chapter).

To conclude, it is interesting to see when teachers talk about technology they posit somewhat multifaceted narratives. Some teachers view technology important for

their teaching profession, whereas for others technology is viewed as a hindrance and a threat to their profession. Such multifaceted narratives show the complexity of identity narratives and that their narratives are dependent on their past experiences. With this in mind we now explore how teachers narrated the loss of authority in their professional as a result of the introduction of the new policies set out by the government.

## **6.6 Lived space: realisation of the loss of authority**

During my fieldwork at both institutions, it seemed that there was a sense that teachers felt obliged to build their own professional credibility in their workplace. For instance, I noticed teachers stating *I built up my authority as a teacher based on what I do and not just on what classification I have in this institution*’.

Similar stories were also shared in the interviews. To illustrate, an art teacher at NC states:

*‘As teachers, we want to establish legitimate authority in the classroom, where we set rules and expectations for students. We also want to provide a positive teaching environment for them. We also show our authority to the management team because we essentially educate students. By this I mean we have to make it clear to them [management team] that we should decide what we need to have and do in our learning environment. However, I do not think that is the case anymore... we have to follow rules and regulations and it’s frustrating’.*

From the above narratives one can argue that authority is a central component in forming teachers' profession role. It appears that teachers like to set their own authority in the classroom and at their institutions. This teacher reflects back on the current changes in the teaching profession and believes that they are losing their legitimate authority and feels uneasy about it. In feeling uneasy about the current change in their profession a psychology teacher at SEC states:

*'I believe that teachers should feel that they are making decisions based on their personal judgments but I think that we are forced to make decisions about how we teach, what we teach, how to communicate with students and what we do at work. For example, we have to follow what the government and Ofsted want us to teach students so they can tick boxes. Our teaching is assessed based on that and I do not think that is the good way to go on about it.'*

From this excerpt one can argue that this teacher thinks that their profession is about making their personal judgment and feels like they are controlled in what they do at work. This suggests that for teachers having an authority regarding what they do at work is an important component for their profession. For example, this teacher states 'we are forced to make decision about what we teach' which suggests that teachers do not have a flexibility on what to teach students and that their professional authority regarding what they teach is restricted.

In reinforcing the above excerpt in the course of the fieldwork at both institutions it appeared that the physical changes at their workplace which were driven through the government policy diminished their professional autonomy. In discussing how their

profession autonomy has diminished, teachers discussed how they were controlled by the government in teaching in their subject. During informal discussions held with teachers and in interviews it appears that teachers question the new concept of the 'modern teaching approach' and that is because they felt that they were losing their jurisdiction control as they feel they are losing their autonomy as a teacher. For example, to appraise how the new organisational space and design forms and reforms the way in which teachers deliver learning, a social sciences teacher states:

*'Just between us, at this college we are so concerned and focused on meeting the targets set by the management and Ofsted and the new space is designed in a way that pleases them... teachers have no say in how teaching is delivered and students are expected to have a laptop with them for every lesson which I feel hinders my professional autonomy. That is because I have to tick boxes when teaching. I feel that the government are more interested in ticking boxes than teaching students and I do not feel I have control over what I teach. When I was a student myself it was more about learning from the teacher and now I feel that is not the case.'*

Thus, one can argue that this teacher believes that the government control their profession and that teaching is all about ticking boxes. This teacher reflects back on when she was a students to explain how their profession has changed throughout the years. It appears that she feels that she is not in control on what she teaches. This narrative reinforced the above excerpt where this teacher feels like their profession is heavily controlled by the management team.

Moreover, teachers across both institutions espouse that their authority is a very important feature in forming their occupational identity. More importantly, it appears that authority is also shown through the way teachers control students in their classroom. It appears that teachers feel that government control their interactions and their approach to teaching. It seems that the change in the organisational space represents new prospects for renegotiating new personas of the self.

In talking about their authority, teachers refer to having less authority when dealing with misbehaving students, and also how students fail to show them respect when they were told not to do something. For instance, during my observation in a science lesson an incident happened between the teacher and a student. The teacher was in the middle of the lesson where this student would not stop distracting other students by playing a loud music and singing along to it. The teacher asked this student to stop doing that but did not take a notice of it. The teacher then asked the student to leave the classroom and the student refused to do so and was being rude to the teacher. The student was shouting at the teacher asking to carry on with the lesson. The teacher had no choice but to inform the head teacher to deal with this issue. After the lesson, I spoke to this teacher about the incident and amongst other things this teacher showed the frustration of the situation by stating, *'Did you see that, what did you make of it and is that acceptable? I feel that I cannot even tell students to leave the classroom. I feel students nowadays feel that they can learn everything by themselves which is not true.'*

Similarly, a Business Studies teacher reflects on how much she values her authority and that she feels disappointed to have to see that diminish over the years. She

believed this change was partly fuelled by the new physical space. In voicing her views she enunciates:

*‘Teaching is about having authority and respect in the classroom and around the college... 20 years ago, when I started this profession, teachers had authority and respect in their classroom and for me that is very important... now I feel I just have to tick boxes. I don’t have authority over students and I don’t think they respect me as a teacher ... the classroom layout is designed by management, hence this is why my desk is placed in here’*

A geography teacher reinforces the importance of the respect for their profession by expressing:

*‘I’m proud of what I achieve as a professional teacher. I’m very defensive of the profession because I think the profession has suffered in some ways. When I came into teaching, the status of a teacher was much higher, teachers were respected....We know what we’re doing in the classroom yet no one really consults the teachers about what would be a good idea... There’s a certain arrogance in management that they know best because they’ve been put into this position of management or deputy principal or principal. The new space at this college does not help this either. I think the management here are far too divorced from any understanding of what these students are like and what they’re going through. If I could, I would recommend that management do more teaching. The deputy principal here does no teaching! Even shadowing a teacher would be good to see some of the pressures. I don’t think there’s real understanding of pressures on teachers or students.’*

The above excerpt conveys a certain level of dissent amongst the ranks; namely across teachers who feel that management are unqualified to comment on their professional practice and professional identity as they do not have any experience at teaching. Hence, although management represent a form of authority, teachers fail to respect them as they do not practice in the teaching profession and thus are seemingly out of touch.

It appears that there is a need to factor in the physical-material or spatial element of the education practice. From research conducted at SEC for example, one notes that generally teachers feel that their occupational autonomy is diminished because of the changes made to the organisational space. In informal discussions held with teachers one notes teachers talking about how they do not have independence in doing their job (teaching) as they have to abide by the policies set by management as previously. As they have to provide an independent learning approach for their students this means that students are encouraged to work more independently and have very little or at least, less contact with their teachers. The design of the new organisational space is therefore designed to provide such new requirements.

## **6.7 Lived space: reflections on technology and identity**

In the previous section we discussed how teachers felt about the technology in terms of how it has affected their teaching approach. In this section we explore how technology diminishes their professional authority. For teachers, technology seemingly serves to diminish their expert autonomy and this is viewed as a threat to occupational identity. Teachers feel ‘imposed upon’ to adapt their classroom layout

around the technology and cannot change it in the way they wanted. In expressing concern one teacher says:

*'I am a traditional teacher and I do not like the idea of using technology for every lesson... What is the point of me being here if students can learn from the internet...I have to adapt the classroom around the technology and I am not comfortable with that.'*

The above narrative suggests that this teacher in discussing how their legitimate authority is diminished discusses how the use of technology has been a hindrance to their profession. We notice this teacher claiming that students cannot learn everything from the internet. In questioning change and the onslaught of technological advance some teachers prefer to maintain more traditional teaching methods and see no significance in technology. For these types of teachers a possible identity crisis could set in; especially if they feel their skills and abilities no longer 'fit' the demands as set out by a more modern teaching mentality. As highlighted by the quote below, teachers reflect back to when they were students to make sense of how the profession has changed throughout the years. For instance, a PE teacher articulates:

*'When I started teaching it was more to do with differentiating and now it is more about personalising learning. This is reflected in the training techniques that we get. The terminology used in the training is driven towards personalising learning. This is reflected by the things that people look for when observing teaching. The introduction of the individual computers in the classroom is assessed as a result of it. You are expected to*



*include change and I feel this is like being in a lecture at university .... This change truly hinders my independence in teaching my subject. I feel I am a facilitator and not a teacher as I used to be prior to this. '*

Similar feelings amount from teachers at NC. For example, a drama teacher expresses herself by stating:

*'When I entered this profession, teaching was about chalk and talk, meaning that teachers had their independence and autonomy in their classroom. That is not the case anymore. I personally feel that I am just a facilitator.... The use of technology throughout the school has caused this change and it is not good for the profession itself... If we just rely on ICT for everything, then what is the point of having teachers?'*

It appears from the above excerpts that teachers as a profession feel devalued and insignificant and that is because this teacher feels like their autonomy is diminished. To be a mere facilitator is therefore reinforced by a greater incorporation of ICT. Indeed, the call for greater acceptance of technology is apparent in the microenvironment. How this force of change from the macro environment filters down to teachers to make sense, and use of, is where policy-making, building design, and spatial arrangement come into play. To illustrate:

*'I think that really the teachers adapt to fit the building, rather than the building being designed for the teachers. We are being shaped to work in a specific way. With the white boards, some teachers would just use that as a projection screen, in the same way they would use an old overhead projector to project things up onto the screen.'*

*'I think my profession actually changes to fit the building, if I am honest. It changes the way in which you teach to adapt to the building, rather than the building being set out.'*

The above two excerpts are teachers reflections as to how their occupational identity, role and practices are seemingly shaped by the building they inhabit. Organisational adaptation is thus driven by the logic of building design and the spatial environment; teachers assumedly fall in line. Still, for some, in spite of what may be dictated by national policy, there is little dialogue shared and thus a shared vision, where theory can translate into practice, is seemingly missing. To illustrate:

*'I think with teaching generally, there are policies but I do what I do. There's always that gap and tension. In training days you get reminded about things. Nationally, I don't know what the current national teaching policy is.'*

Hence, as can be seen, practice may, in fact, deviate from theories of planned space. Moreover, in surmising over the spatial design of the physical schooling environment one teacher provides a provocative narrative concerning the interplay spanning the logic of spatial design and human consciousness set against a backdrop of educational theory. To illustrate:

*"It's divided up into functional blocks according to some esteemed logic. It's like sciences, humanities and so on. In a way this architecture has been based on theory and logic, but in a way, it's practical. There are constraints*

*to what you do, so the logic of the building determines what you do. It's interesting how they've divided it into humanities and sciences and design and the sixth form area. I don't know whether that enters people's minds too much, but the curriculum has been designed around that as well. You've got your labs in one place and drama in one place, so there's that logic but then it does more than just reflect it. What I've noticed after this move, is that spaces between these areas seem bigger because it's quite a big school now and it's spread apart. I think that means that teaching groups tend to be bit more separated than before...So that is not directly about the teaching, it's about positioning within the school itself."*

As can be noted from the above, the teacher makes frequent reference to the word 'logic'. He muses over how the building is designed according to a theory of education; namely that of disciplinary specialisation, rather than a more integrated, shared approach. Thus, contrary to spatial design geared towards engendering a more open and shared space that evokes a similar ethos in terms of academic learning, the physical separation of disciplines - as mirrored by physically separated buildings - represents an ideational, barrier to the desired 'thinking' and 'practice' of national level policy-making. The teacher even reflects on whether this 'enters people's minds'. Hence, he invokes reflections spanning the logic of design in terms of architecture and human consciousness, which is set against a backdrop of educational theory. To conclude, the above narrative suggests that teachers feel that their professional authority is weakened because of the new government policy and the introduction of the use of the technology. They feel the design of the building is also geared to represent the government policy in which they feel that it controls

their professional role. The other aspect that we will explore is the importance of the security.

## **6.8 Lived space: narratives of security**

Through informal discussions and interviews with teachers, feeling safe and secure at work is important for teachers. In reflecting on the importance of the safe and secure workplace teachers reflect back on what it was like to teach at their old institutions. For example, the new organisational space rids teachers at NC of their one-time fear of being assaulted by outsiders. Without exception, teachers at both institutions feel that their current working environment is *‘much safer and secured when compared with the old building(s)’*. Such change has an optimistic formation on teachers’ personality and positive professional image. For instance, one teacher in appreciating this change at the NC states:

*‘I think we’re on a pretty safe site here because we’ve got a secure fence outside and CCTV cameras around the place, which helps us to make sure students are behaving correctly. Also, issues about the safety of students, both inside the building and outside, can be addressed quickly. I think that has improved over the past.*

*‘The old building was broken up into four separate sites. Teachers were constantly changing, and quite often moving. Students just walked in and out of the building if they wanted to. There were no restrictions stopping them. Also, conversely, you could have people coming in to the whole site as well. Someone could just walk off the street and potentially come in through the side without being challenged. In these days of health and safety, that’s not*

*good.... We are teachers and not security guards and it is important that we have a safe working environment. ...students and visitors have their cards with them at all times. That makes it much safer for the staff at this relatively large school, because you know who you are talking to.'*

From the above excerpts one can argue that for teachers security is very important for their formation of the professional identity and that the new organisational space provides that. For this teacher in reflecting on the importance of security at workplace refers back to the previous experience. For example, this teacher reflects back on the incidents that happened at the old buildings. The new security measures seemed to have a positive effect in the teaching profession. Similarly, in the interview with a teacher at SEC one notes that in showing her appreciation about security and safety she states:

*'I feel much safer now knowing that outside people can't get inside. It used to be very easy. I have had confrontations with, (I say confrontations, discussions) with non-students being here before who have come in to watch football matches because they used to be able to pretty much just walk in.'*

Expectations are also met in terms of how space facilitates learning. To illustrate:

*I think the design has been brilliant. It's had a massive impact on the students and how we use the space.'*

*'I think it has certainly changed pupils' minds towards lessons and school and what you can offer them. It certainly makes it easier to be a modern teacher because there is a much more relaxed, open feel to the school and to*

*teaching. Quite simply, there's so much space that everyone has their own space. Members of staff, pupils; it doesn't matter who you are, you have a designated space that is yours which makes a difference to people's minds and attitudes.'*

Thus, one can argue that organisational space provides consciousness and territorialism for teacher's profession. For instance, for this teacher it appears that it is important for them to have their own space and that is because it provides a sense of continuity. Equally, fieldwork conducted at both SEC and NC spanning the different teachers from different departments has allowed one to observe how teachers feel about the new organisational space. In particular, one notes that teachers across departments hold different views when it comes to the new organisational space.

## **6.9 Lived space: experiences of open shared space**

During informal discussions with teachers at both institutions, it appears that they feel that the new organisational space provides an open/shared space, which has had an adverse effect on themselves and students alike. The emphasis on the provision of open and shared space is represented in spatial design. As one teacher succinctly puts it:

*'When we come to the issue of space, the basic idea is to provide open/shared space for our students. That is to remove that barrier between the student and the teacher and I think that is very important.'*

For some, when appraising the new organisational space in terms of helping or hindering pedagogical performance, hindrance was experienced in the form of ‘too much openness’. To illustrate:

*‘I think it hinders in some ways, because some areas are perhaps a bit too open. In some of the resource areas, you might have some students working and some where there aren’t. There are no doors or anything, so it’s a bit too open.’*

It appears that for this teacher open space is not ideal for their profession and it would suggest that they prefer to have their private space. At the same time, the organisational space for some is also cramped. This holds potential influence upon their wellbeing. For others a lack of space makes them feel undervalued. For instance, a teacher from SEC states:

*I just don’t think we’re valued enough to give us space. I think that’s what it comes down to, definitely the staffroom.’*

Likewise, students are seemingly short of space too. To illustrate, a teacher from SEC notes:

*‘I think there’s a lot of neglect. It upsets me when there’s no room for the kids. There isn’t any social room for them away from us. I think we should make them feel included, so that they would have somewhere to hang out and they would come here more often. I think in terms of space for staff as well. We’ve got this little bloody staffroom. There’s no natural light, you don’t even have windows... I don’t think it reflects anything about inclusivity. I*

*don't think it makes you feel included. I don't think it makes you feel welcome, for staff or students really. You're given a desk that you have to put all your work on. Unfortunately we don't live in a paperless society, so it's completely inadequate.'*

It is clear from the narrative above that for both teachers and students the more socially oriented side of life is overlooked and this renders a feeling of being excluded, not deemed as important. There is evidence of discord, as teachers have no communal spaces to socialise with their colleagues. The earlier analyses in this chapter show that teaching is about being with people and learning from each other. For instance, an art teacher states:

*'Don't get me wrong I love the people I work with and I love my profession, but in the recent years it has changed a lot. This physical space has changed the way I teach and work at this place.... now I cannot even have a quiet lunch because I have to be on my toes all the time'.*

For this teacher it appears that the physical space is important for their profession and feels that this change hinders their professional role as a professional teacher. Interestingly however, for this teacher at the new organisational space he has to be on his 'toes all the time'. But at the same time the previous narratives suggests that the new organisational space has improved teacher's and student's morale and that students are able to work more freely and they (teachers) are able to see them what they are doing. When it comes to their professional identity, it appears that teachers do not like change and also feel that their professional identity is threatened. This suggests that several narratives coexist and they vary depending on the situation that



one is in. This teacher here is complaining that there is no private space to have a quite lunch, whereas earlier narratives shows that teaching is helping and being there for their colleagues and students alike. This is an example of how identity is not fixed and narratives are multifaceted and change accordingly.

## **6.10 Chapter summary**

To conclude, through Ibarra's conceptualisation of professional identity and Lefebvre's work on organisational space we notice that identity of teachers is multiple and built on multiple distinctions. In discussing the importance of profession this chapter shows that teaching is an elite profession and that teachers are very proud of it. One claims that teachers teach world leaders and they have a monopoly knowledge power and that not everyone can become a teacher. In other words, they feel that they educate the society and their profession is not a 'second class' one.

They are also very protective of their profession. For teachers, the new initiatives implemented by government and the management team are viewed as threatening to their profession. Not everyone can adapt from '*chalk and talk*' to being a '*facilitator*'. Teachers felt that being a '*facilitator*' and providing an independent learning approach loosens their jurisdictional control over their profession. It seems that they question whether that works in practice. These findings provide some interesting and multifaceted findings when it came the introduction of the technology. On one hand teachers feels that it makes their life easier, whereas on the other hand it serves as a threat to their expertise.

What becomes apparent from the pedagogy analysis is that teachers are spatially attached to their institution that they teach in. The new building provides teachers with a sense of continuity and it upholds their professional identity as they associated themselves with the building. For them the new building renegotiates both personal and public opinions of self. The new government initiatives are viewed as threatening for the teaching profession. This is because teachers believe that the introduction of the independent learning and them becoming facilitators diminish the autonomy that they have with students in class. They feel that students do not have the respect that they had in the past and that loss of control in the classroom is an issue pertinent for addressing their sense of continuity as teachers.

Another important conclusion drawn out of these analyses is that teachers view safety and security as important for their profession role. The narratives show that teachers value the secure working environment and this is because they reflect on what was in the past and how it affects their profession. The introduction of open shared space is viewed as a threat for teachers' profession. They feel that it devalues their professional role and this leads them to question the sense of belonging. This is self-contradictory from what they discussed in terms of what it is like to be a teacher. They state that being a teacher is about being a people person and here they are saying that we need our private space. These multifaceted narratives convey the difficulty that narratives are situational and complex.

All in all, this chapter shows that narratives are situational and complex and are based on the reflections of the past compared with present. More importantly it shows that occupational identity is a spatially moulded reality and teachers only become aware of its importance when space is altered from what was in the past.

## **Chapter 7: Narratives of collegiality, distinction and ownership of space: How teachers' practices and identity are anchored in space**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is given to the narratives of collegiality, distinction and ownership of the physical space in the workplace and the way that teachers presume their collegiality. Through Ibarra's conceptualisation of identity and Lefebvre's thinking on space, attention here is given to teachers' narratives in which they discuss their professional role, and the way they make a distinction between 'us and them'. In discussing teachers' more meaningful interpretations of space at both institutions, focus here is given to the spaces that teachers give emotional feelings towards their professional activities. This includes spaces being regarded as interpersonal; equally producing a product of interrelating social practices.

Furthermore, the analysis now focuses on the way space at both institutions is 'produced and manifest in the experiences' of teachers who reside in the space. Attention is given to examining teachers' perceptions, desires, feelings, interpretations, fantasies and imaginations about space. The reason for doing so is to scrutinise teachers' lived experience about their organisational spaces. Elsbach (2003; 2004) indicates that when there is an organisational transformation, for example the relocation to a new workplace environment, there is a change in the manner in which workers narrate and recognise each other and their work place. In this way, her work helps us to appreciate the importance of togetherness, community and personalised space at the workplace.

Picking up from what was briefly touched upon for the pedagogy narratives, for teachers, the relationship with their colleagues is vital for their profession. In facilitating the modern teaching approach, collegiality is noted for being an important feature of in-group identity and collaborative work efforts. People-oriented behaviours and appreciations are seemingly influenced by teachers inherently seeking a sense of belonging and respect. Such narratives became apparent during one's fieldwork. One of the key meaningful spaces for teachers is their departmental staffroom. At each institution the departmental staffroom holds special meaning for teachers for different reasons, as will be elaborated in greater detail below. One notes that teachers give special meaning to this space because it forms their sense of continuity and that it suits their needs of being in an environment where they can have an informal gathering, engage in gossiping, socialising, interacting, and emotionally unload.

## **7.2 Lived space: space bringing staff together**

Whilst conducting the fieldwork gathered at SEC and at NC, teachers in general preferred to escape to their departmental staffroom to catch up with fellow work colleagues or just take some rest. During my fieldwork at both institutions it appeared that there was evidence that teaching profession had a strong people orientation and the relationship with their colleagues was deemed to be critical for the profession. For instance, during my informal discussion with teachers I noticed one stating:

*'I enjoy working with people in this department; I could not do this job without their support. We have a close relationship with each other and I*

*think that is crucial for teachers, because we need to be there for each other when needed.'*

This close relationship seemed to take place in their departmental staffroom. The departmental staffroom is a space of marked territory, private and exclusive to the department in question, and teachers seem to be very protective of it. Firstly, in their departmental staffroom at NC teachers take possession of a table in the middle of the staffroom, as shown below in the **Figure 1** where they have their lunch.



**Figure 11** Departmental staffroom at NC

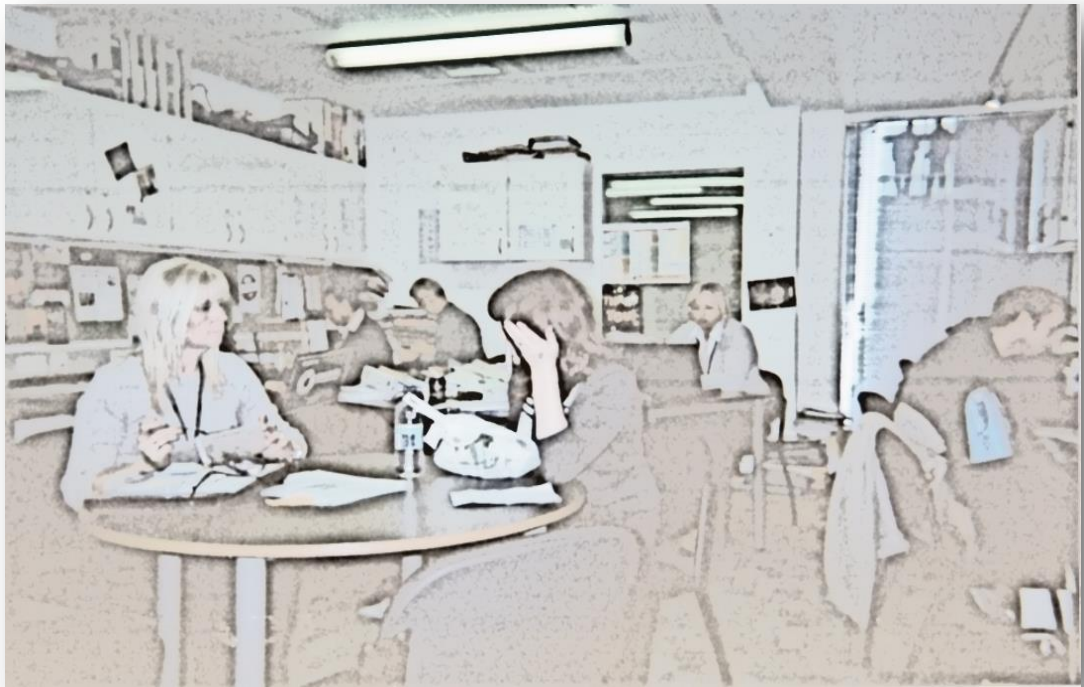
In showing how teachers utilise their staffroom, a media teacher at NC took a picture of it and talked about it in interview. In the interview she says:

*'I have taken these pictures to show you how we utilise our departmental staffroom. This is our leisure gathering ... [the table in the middle is our*

*social place] ... and that is the place where we talk about random and silly stuff. This is also our workplace. As you can see from this picture we have a printer and paperwork all over the place.'*

Serving a dual purpose of work and play, the staffroom is a significant place. One could argue that this teacher took a picture of a table to narrate the importance of having a close relationship with their work colleagues. Again, this narrative gives importance to ownership of the space. The expressions used here, including '*our departmental staffroom*'... '*our social place*'... '*our workplace*' suggests that this teacher has a strong sense of ownership of space and that this space belongs to the media teachers. One would suggest that this space provides teachers with a sense of belonging, in this instance, being part of the media department. This space is utilised as serving a multi-purpose function for teachers in their department.

Equally, the importance of the departmental staffroom becomes apparent in dialogue held with teachers at SEC who also took pictures of their departmental staffroom to support its significance of the social interaction. For instance, one science teacher took a picture of the departmental staffroom as shown below in **Figure 2** and described how this was their community gathering, their socialising place, and more importantly, a place that served to reduce the experience of stress in the workplace.



**Figure 12 Departmental staffroom at SEC**

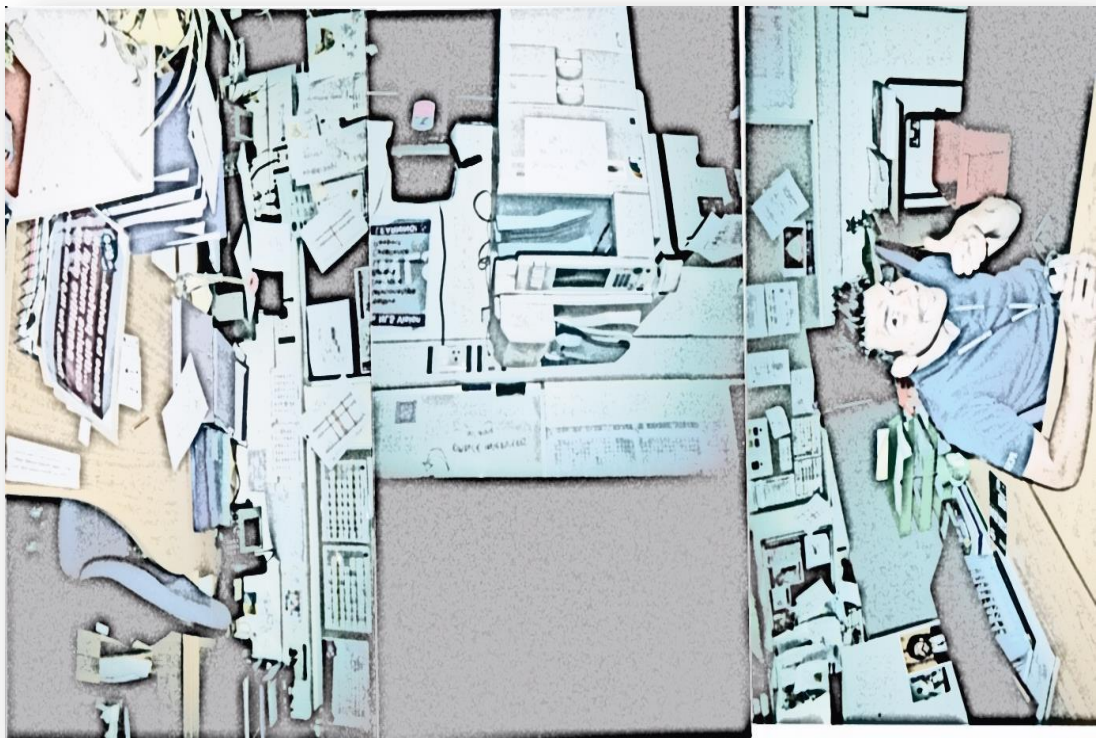
In describing this picture, this teacher states:

*‘As you can see from this picture this is where I spend my free time. There is my desk where I work, and this round table in the middle of the staffroom is where we gossip and have informal and formal gatherings with other members of the staff.’*

Interestingly, for this teacher the departmental staffroom played an important role in socialising and working with colleagues. From these narratives one argues that this teacher views this space as their own and there is a strong sense of belonging. One can argue that the departmental staffroom is a space where brings teachers in the department together. Again, from this narrative one can argue that for this teacher

the relationship with her colleagues is deemed to be crucial and that is because this was their social gathering and this was part of their daily routine.

Similarly, in showing how space upholds in-group identity a teacher at NC gave an interesting account of the value of the departmental staffroom. To illustrate, this drama teacher chose to take a picture of her desk along with the printer and the people who use the office as shown in **Figure 3** below.



**Figure 13 Importance of the departmental office at NC**

In describing the importance of these pictures this teacher goes into details explaining each picture. For instance, in talking about the people in the picture, she states:



*He has been helpful in different ways and this staffroom is the central point to meet him. The support from him is when you're in a class and you're freaking out a little bit. He will step in and say "why don't you try this and that?" He is able to give you advice knowing exactly what you are going through as a drama teacher, help you through any situations, problems, issues, that you might have. We use this staffroom as a social gathering and I sometimes bake some cakes and leave them on the table to thank them for their endless help.'*

*'This one is about technology in the staffroom. It is good to have the printer in your department rather than having to go to the IT centre as we used to do in the old building. It makes a huge difference to my teaching.'*

*'In this picture, I have included my desk and I have personalised it in the way I wanted. It is my personal space and I am grateful for it. It makes me feel important and I call it my desk in the staffroom and no one can take it away from me'*

From these three pictures and narratives discussed by this teacher one can argue that the departmental staffroom brings teachers together. One can argue that for this teacher having people who support her means it stops her freaking out when something goes wrong with the computer. In other words this teacher is discussing the importance of the human support at the workplace and the departmental staffroom is one place that provides that. Taking a picture of a person who is always available and narrating that this is the central point to meet him also suggests that this space provides help and support for one and another. This is a central point for

help when needed and from these narratives it suggests that this teacher has used him in the past and finds him valuable.

Equally, by taking a picture of a printer also suggests a sense of belonging and this teacher has claimed this space as being hers and the department that she teaches in. One can equally argue that this teacher is claiming her sense of ownership and claiming her sense of territorialism. For instance, we notice that this teacher uses the word 'my desk' and 'my personal space' and such phrases suggests that this teacher is showing a sense of ownership and expressing her territorial space in the departmental staffroom. To conclude, in this section we have explored the importance of the collegiality for teaching profession and how the departmental staffroom brings teachers together. Having explored that, below we explore how the design of the new organisational space keeps teachers apart from each other.

### **7.3 Perceived and lived space: space keeping us apart**

What became interesting is that during the fieldwork conducted at both institutions is the way teachers narrated on the design and positioning of their departmental staffroom. It appears that teachers view the positioning of their departmental staffroom relative to the main staffroom as a boundary prohibiting chances to collaborate with their colleagues from other departments. It seems that for teachers, collegiality is significant for their profession for the reasons explained above. In a profession where collegiality is seemingly key, teachers miss out on the sharing of ideas across differing departments, as well as the social side of work. During informal discussions held with teachers it appeared that there is a disruption of collegiality and this is because the design of architecture in space prevents

interaction with colleagues in other departments. For instance, amongst other things one notes a teacher saying:

*‘Every department has its own staffroom and they are located next to teaching classrooms. We rarely interact with colleagues from other departments and that is something that I miss.’*

From this narrative one can argue that this teacher recognises the changes at the new organisational space by reflecting back on what they had in the past. This teacher viewed their positioning of their departmental staffroom with boundaries on chances to collaborate with their colleagues from other departments. It seemed that for this teacher collaboration is significant for their profession. For this teacher it suggests that he feels that space is keeping teachers from different departments apart from each other. At the same time, for a few teachers this is the best option. For instance, in during informal discussions held with teachers very few teachers view this change as a positive thing because she was *‘able to do more work in the quiet environment’*.

More importantly, in reflecting how their interaction has changed at their new organisational space teachers tend to put their point across by reflecting back to their old building and what they had before the spatial domain change. In this study it appeared that it was possible for teachers to get a sense of being constrained by the physical design in which they found themselves. From teachers’ narratives it appeared that isolation tends to be expressed in terms of a lack of social gathering and as needing more contact with their colleagues. In other words, from this study it appeared that it was possible for teachers to get a sense of being constrained by the

physical design in which they found themselves. For instance, an English teacher expresses his disappointment of the new organisational space by stating:

*'I'm not sure about the designation of space in terms of the staffroom at this college. There's no staff area and that's a massive thing. In the old building we had a staff room and there's no staff room now. That's a shame because there's no point in the day now where you see other people from the main building. Some people I don't see for weeks. In the old building you would have your pigeon holes in the same staff room and it was more social. But nonetheless I think the main thing is that we do tend to be slightly isolated from each other on three floors...'*

One can argue in this quote we have a respondent highlighting their sense that there is a lack of communal areas now. We assume that is remarkable to them because their experience at their old building. Also, this quote, it appears that this teacher reflects on the old building design to reflect on the new changes and feels uneasy about them. It could be argued that this teacher recognises the change and acknowledges the importance of being around work colleagues. The main question which one could draw out from this is that does the physical layout of the building diminishes teacher's morale, and if so, the next question would be to find out whether they (teachers) are doing anything about these changes. One thing that becomes clear here is that, for teachers, it appears that space is separating them from other colleagues from other departments.

Building on this point, during one's informal discussions with teachers at both institutions, teachers felt that the new organisational space acts to isolate them. For

instance, expressions gathered from informal discussions include, *'sometimes I do not see a work colleague for days', 'I cannot remember last time I went to the main hub.'* This isolation contributes to subordination and assumed jurisdiction of both individuals and groups. This is because teachers at both institutions recognise and understand the isolation they experience with their colleagues at workplace due to the positioning and design of the workspace.

The lack of space for collaboration is one of the main issues that teachers feel bitter about and do not approve of. At SEC, teachers have formed a group to deal with this issue. In that team teachers got together and express their feelings and have appointed a leader who reports anonymously to their head teacher. Interestingly, in this meeting there are teachers who just joined the team because they believe that they are isolated at the college. This meeting takes place once a month and teachers report on any developments. In discussion with a science teacher, feelings towards the new organisational space are voiced. It seems that teachers upon reflection do not appreciate the spatial change and they want to make their voice heard with the management team, including their head teacher. Unsurprisingly, this issue emerges throughout interviews held with all teachers at the college. For instance, a teacher from the sport department states:

*'It feels like being in a faculty at university, where you do not have access to or do not use other faculties, due to the physical space separation that has been recently created within the college. There is no interaction across the subject areas. For example, I hardly leave this building, so I hardly get to see any other teachers outside my subject area. In that sense, I feel rather isolated and this has been created by the physical space positioning.'*

Isolation transpires due to the segregation of academic learning, and no convenient location for staff of differing departments to meet. A similar story is evident at NC where teachers also feel isolated. One notes that although, unlike SEC, teachers here have a main staffroom, although they hardly make use of it. They use their departmental staffroom instead. Teachers explicitly state that they do not use the main staffroom because of its physical positioning in relation to their teaching classrooms. They affirm that they are '*way too busy with their work, inconvenient to walk there*' and they have everything they need at their departmental staffroom.

So far it has been shown how space brings together and divides teachers with the main emphasis given to the position of the departmental staffroom. The analysis so far suggest that narratives are multifaceted and situational, meaning that individuals give different meanings to a change based on the perspective that he or she might be looking at it.

Furthermore, a definite segregation of academic learning seemingly prevails as noted from the lack of communal space to be shared by teachers across department. In reflecting upon such change, some teachers believe that the design space is possibly preventing that. That is why teachers give a high significance and special meaning to their departmental staffroom. For example, the teachers at SEC value and give special meaning to their departmental staffroom. The following reason is given: that teachers value this space because in this college there is no main departmental staffroom where all teachers from different departments can gather collectively. Indeed, teachers seem very upset about the fact they do not have a main staffroom; accordingly, their departmental staffroom takes on special meaning for them. Upon reflection, the transformation in the organisational space may lead to re-evaluations

of identity, especially in light of behavioural change in terms of work practices. For instance, a music teacher at SEC in expressing her concerns and the importance of the staffroom states:

*'There are no common staff areas besides the eating area, and most staff do not eat there. If you compare that to what we had a year ago, areas were even further sub-divided, so you would have a media staff room, art staff room, music staff room... now all those areas within creative arts are together. I think because we have this faculty structure, the danger is that you get this mentality where each group is doing their own thing, with very little cooperation.'*

Without collaboration, divisions of labour could also lend itself to a waste of resources. To reflect on space, the design of a faculty structure learning environment is physically reinforced by the way in which buildings are spatially located and designed. To appraise whether or not teachers actually feel that the new buildings and space meet their needs and demands as modern professional teachers, one teacher states:

*'I hope the modern teacher can seek to get best practise from colleagues (which I would hope would be happening so that we're not constantly re-inventing the wheel in different areas). I'm not sure the building is well suited for that to happen in an effective fashion.'*

It is interesting to notice that this teacher in discussing the importance of the communal spaces narrates that the new building is not 'well suited'. One could argue that they are constantly reinventing the wheel in the pursuit of best teaching practice

is indeed a possibility if departments are spatially positioned in a way they are not able to interact.

Other teachers upon reflecting on the importance of a collective and close teaching community highlight the issue of the lack of staff spaces. A science teacher for example articulates:

*'I don't like the staff spaces, I think they are too small and isolate us from integrating with teachers from other departments... there is no social area for staff, no central staffroom and it seems to me that they [management team] don't care for us [teachers].'*

One can argue that this teacher realises the importance of space for their profession when space is taken away from them. It suggests that for teachers' profession having a communal space is critical. Such views come across from the interviews where teachers emphasise how the current physical layout has diminished teachers' interactions amongst their colleagues from across the school.

In reinforcing the importance of social gathering with teachers across other departments a PE teacher amongst other things states:

*'It is strange really. I think that there are groups within groups, within groups, kind of thing. The staff areas have created divisions, I believe; not divisions between staff, but it automatically put you into groups. You socialise with the people you share areas with. I am not keen for this behaviour, because teaching for me is about being close together as one professional community where we can talk to each other about any*



*issues/comments that we might have and I don't see that happening in this college...'*

Likewise, teachers at NC shared similar views. Interaction with staff outside of one's department is difficult due to spatial design. To illustrate:

*'To go and see this teacher in person will take me at least 10 minutes to get there, as he is located at the central hub and as you can see we are far away from that... I wouldn't feel comfortable going to his staffroom... I am aware that this is not a good thing to say, as social gathering and closeness with other teachers is a positive thing, but the physical architectural design restricts us from being altogether...that is the reality'*

It appears that the isolation and segregation at NC was created because of its physical design. From this narrative, one can argue that this teacher would use the central hub if he was closer to it but as it stands he does not have enough time to do so. This narrative also suggests that teachers had limited time to move from one place to another and that also contributed to the segregation and territorialism across institutions. Having explored how the design of the organisational space contributed to keeping teachers apart from their colleagues, below we explore how the new organisational space creates the tribe effect amongst teachers.

#### **7.4 Lived space: reflection on tribe effect**

It seems the lack of having a main staffroom and the design of the buildings have caused the 'tribe effect' across the departments and that is consequential for their professional role. For example, a social sciences teacher at NC states:

*'The architecture of the building dismantled the tribal culture. It dispersed the tribes into various areas, except maybe for finance and HR... they still seem to be sitting together. Everyone else seems to be dispersed and this is not great for our professionalism... there are some boundaries which are down to architecture. You've got the staffroom which is used by public services and sports. They don't have many boundaries, as they are made to sit together. Performing arts seem to be sitting more on their own in the lighting room. So there's definitely a boundary there. In the other departments, you've got the music department and the arts department together, so there's not a strong boundary there. Then you've got the science department and there is a boundary. Some of these boundaries are down to architecture...'*

This teacher explicitly narrates that the physical design has form dismantles of the tribe culture at the college. This teacher also recognises how some departments have strong boundaries suggesting that this is 'their' place imbued with sub-group identity.

From informal discussions, teachers highlight how they feel that the current physical building design has caused a tribe affect and that there are now boundaries between departments. This means that their community gathering and closeness with colleagues from other department has diminished and is not the same as it used to be in the old building. Teachers appear to feel that such loss of community gathering and closeness is not conducive to their professional needs and this hinders a sense of togetherness and collaboration within the team. A compelling perspective comes from a social sciences teacher, who reveals:

*'I would say PE has quite a dominant space. That's probably because it's quite a large space and also they have quite a lot of colleagues in there who have worked their way up the career ladder. I would probably use the word 'tribe', as they are definitely an organisation with high prevalence... I certainly don't approve of that because we [teachers] should be one big community and I don't see that happening at this school...'*

From this excerpt one can argue that this teacher disapproves of the new architectural design and feels that some departments have dominant spaces. This teacher implies that organisational space is distributed depending on their career progression in the institution. Further to this, in commenting on the boundaries around the school this teacher explains:

*'You tend to knock or you tend to go a little bit on your toes when you go to other teachers' staffrooms... Some groups make you feel more welcome than others. ... For example, with social sciences we're in a good situation where there are a lot of different offices around. There's the head of sixth form's office, there's dance and so on, so we end up blurring groups.'*

For this teacher one can argue that she does not feel comfortable in going to other teacher's staffroom and when she does she seems to be alert in what she says or does. From these narratives, one could argue this teacher recognises the tribes in each department. It appears that for teachers having a space is important for their profession and they are protective of it. They realise that each department has claimed their own space and that they respect that.

An identification of the physical boundaries, although not being constrained and required just to reside at their departmental staffroom, at the same time being able to criticise them, was manifested in what one teacher states:

*‘Because of the current spatial layout and the lack of communal staffrooms, teachers, including myself, all work together in their own committees. We teachers tend to meet each other in our own committees and that is, in a way, how we recognise boundaries between departments. I am not convinced that is great for our professional community’*

From this quote, it appeared that the lack of physical boundaries at workplace was sensed as threatening and dysfunctional to their profession. For example, words, such as ‘we’ and not being ‘convinced’ with the current physical layout of the building would suggest that teachers view this new physical layout as threatening to their professional community.

Interestingly, a teacher from NC narrates that teachers have always had a certain amount of space and because of that reason there is an open tribe. In this sense, this teacher is suggesting that teachers are expected to have their own space because they have had in the past. Another interpretation that one could make from this narrative is that teachers are not given space they will claim as their own space. To illustrate, this teacher from NC states:

*‘Tribes, yes. I think historically, teachers have always believed that they own a certain amount of space. To a certain extent you could say there’s a tribal aspect. When you create faculties, you create a sort of tribal imagery. Then giving each department spaces, you’re reinforcing the stereotypical tribal*

*aspect. The sports department is quite tribal but as a school I think we're very open; an open tribe.'*

In discussing tribes with buildings designed to promote a faculty orientation, some level of contradiction arises from the above excerpt. In one breath tribes are affirmed, yet then refuted as a plausible notion in the next. Despite the turn of events, teachers still use their given space as maximally as possible, which in this instance, is the departmental staffroom, used for more social and supportive activities. This is a backstage space where teachers feel relatively relaxed and enjoy a more congenial atmosphere, freed for a moment from responsibility. Teachers feel that this is their private space and it has a boundary beyond the visible, as well as controlled. This is because this space blocks them off from the rest of the world and it is where they have their secrets conversations. Again, this is the space where teachers feel safe and secure. Also, feeling like it is their territory, they claim the space as their private space. To illustrate:

*'This is where I belong. This is the only place that I can be myself and is a place where I can socialise with my colleagues.'* [Field notes; sociology teacher at SEC].

Similarly, during an informal discussion with a Graphic teacher from NC:

*'I am sure you have seen the main staffroom at the front of the building. Just like other teachers, I do not use that space. I spend my free time in this staffroom. This is because I have the feeling that this space belongs to the graphic and design department. Hence, I feel comfortable in socialising and*

*interacting with my colleagues from my department. In a way, this is a work and social place for us.'*

The interdisciplinary staffroom is not a space teachers feel compelled towards. Instead the staffroom designated specifically for the each department (in the case above, graphic and design) is seemingly more appealing and welcoming a place to be and live in, time permitting. Having explored how the design of the new organisational space formed tribes between colleagues across both institutions, below we explore how teachers personalises spaces to claim spaces as a result of the introduction of the hot-desking.

### **7.5 Hot-desking approach – used personalised space to claim spaces**

It appears that teachers recognise that the open shared (hot-desking) concept introduced by government and view this as a threat to their profession. Earlier on one briefly touched on how teachers are expected to own a certain amount of space to include their classroom. However, the introduction of the 'hot-desking' has meant that teachers have to share their classrooms with their colleagues. It appears teachers are attached to their classroom (as explored below) and they personalise their classroom to claim it as their own. In other words, personalised space is used as a method of stamping ownership of their space in the sense they felt it is necessary to their profession. During informal discussions with teachers, teachers say how they *'deliberately leave personal belongings on the table'* to claim a space and convey a stamp of ownership.

In asking teachers about their views on open shared space they state:

*This is an old notion that was originally introduced in the USA in 1980's and we are copying their concept. What is the point of it? This is not working in the USA and they are going back to the closed environment. Surely that must say something about hot-desking.'*

From this excerpt it appears that teachers were aware of the hot-desking concept and they also knew that did not work in the past. Thus, one can argue that teachers have already made their mind up about the introduction of this concept. It appears that they are not keen on this concept which would suggest that they feel that the introduction of this concept is viewed as a threat to their profession.

During semi-structured interviewing, an English teacher at NC in discussing the importance of the personalised classroom takes a picture as shown in **Figure 4** below.



**Figure 14** An English teacher at NC talking about her personalised classroom

This teacher goes on to talk about the value of her own classroom and how she claims this space as being hers. She goes on to say:

*‘There were still members of this department this year, that do not have their own classroom and they were going from class to class. It is very difficult if you do not have a base as a teacher..... I think in terms of the classroom, I am proud of it. Aesthetically speaking, this classroom represents my professional identity as an English teacher...I do not feel comfortable when other teachers come in – it is my classroom and it is my personal working space. I don’t think I have a lock on my desk. I know other teachers do have that, but I know that other teachers know that this is my room. No one comes in unless they have to get in touch with me...’*

Thus in spite of what is intended by national policy, such as ‘hot-desking’, as well as organisational level policy as regards to efforts to introduce room rotation and open shared space, teachers assert themselves and their identity by dismissing the wishes of management and those higher up the hierarchy. Indeed, acts of territorialism seemingly abound. This teacher gives a special meaning to her classroom. For instance, we notice her state that ‘she is proud of her classroom’ suggesting she is emotionally attached to it. It appears that because of that, she feels that it is her classroom and does not feel comfortable in allowing other teachers to use it.

One also notices that teachers refer to the imaginary space in describing their perfect workplace. In doing so, they highlight that they would like to have their own classroom as it is representative of their identity and of who they are. For instance,



teachers at this college assert that they are very determined to get their own personal classroom. One teacher states:

*'I would like to have my own classroom and have my own privacy'*

Other comments include:

*'We will fight for our privacy and our own classroom... I want to have my own classroom so that I can set it up the way I want and that is very important for me and my profession...'*

To claim a space that reinforces one's identity and sense of worth, teachers- although they did not have their individual classrooms - attempt to personalise classrooms by placing their subject posters on the walls along with their students' work, as well as by storing their work in the classrooms. To illustrate:

*'I do not have anything against sharing this space with the English department as such. There is nothing wrong with that, but I would like to have my personal class to teach these kids because I would like to get the sense that I am important in this college. Also, I think that it is important for me as a teacher to say this is my space and leave things the way I would like to be.... As we stand, we share everything and there is no privacy here. I don't feel comfortable about it.'*

In not providing teachers with their own personalised space, the designations of space seemingly serve to devalue the profession. In recognising the importance of the personalised classroom a music teacher refers to a lack of space and how this

adversely affects her teaching ability. In interview she expresses her frustration by saying:

*‘Well I kind of have my own office so I’m unique in that sense, but in terms of teaching rooms we generally don’t have one classroom per teacher and that hinders working at my best ability. We teach in every room within our designated area so we don’t have a situation where spaces belong to a specific teacher. That is an issue at this college. If I had my personal space I would decorate it and organise it the way I wanted... at the moment I cannot do that and it is annoying.’*

Thus one reason for why she feels annoyed is due to the lack of access to a personal classroom space. It appears that this teacher would like to personalise her classroom and one could argue in this way this teacher would stamp her professional identity as being a teacher. Again, it appears that this teacher is reflecting back on what they had in the past and finding it annoying that she cannot have that now. This suggests that personalised space serves as ownership space for teachers.

Thus, contrary to the ideal of ‘sharing resources’ seemingly fuelled by an ethic of collegiality, allowing for a more fluid resource exchange, the notions of ‘mine’ and ‘I’ still prevail. To illustrate:

*I do not feel comfortable using someone else’s computer...It is not mine and I would not feel comfortable if my colleague used my computer or was just sitting in my classroom.’*

A similar take is observed in terms of teachers making use of ‘student’ space. For instance, whilst at SEC teachers’ take on the resource learning area is as follows:

*‘We have to respect someone else’s space and the resource learning area is not our personal space to take over whenever we want...We have our allocated spaces which we utilise.’*

Space is observed to create boundaries and mark territory in terms of who is able to access a particular physical space. The resources learning area is a facility for students, yet teachers (though being a source of resource and learning themselves) do not feel they are privy to use that space. For teachers to feel comfortable in using it, it seems it would need to be defined as *‘their personal space’*. To conclude, in this section we explored how teachers personalised their workplace to claim their own space to respond to the introduction of the hot-desking concept. Below, we go a step further and explore how the design of the new organisational space created the distinction between us and them.

## **7.6 Tension between conceived and lived space: narratives of ‘us and them’**

For teachers the introduction of the hot-desking distinguished teachers with the management team. It appears that teachers at both institutions, but especially at SEC, feel that there is such an uneven distribution of space at the college. Indeed, teachers are annoyed with the lack of space that they have to utilise. For instance, in interviews, teachers took a picture of a boardroom meeting as shown in **Figure 5** below. In providing narratives as inspired by this picture, this teacher states:

*‘Let’s have a look at this picture. What do you make of it? Look at it; do we really need that space for our meeting with the principal? I believe that this is such a waste of space. I cannot understand their rationale behind such huge space, I really cannot. We are crammed into the small staffroom and some classrooms are overcrowded. How can they justify this? You tell me’.*



**Figure 15 Picture of the boardroom at SEC**

From the above narrative one can argue that this teacher feels frustrated with the distribution of space. This teacher feels that the management team needs to make better use of space. It also suggests that this teacher makes a distinction between the head teacher and teachers (us and them) and feels frustrated as to why the head teacher does not provide more space for teachers. In the same way, at NC held similar strong views on the head teacher’s office. They feel that the head teacher is

privy to a lot of space, when in fact they were told that no one would have their own office. One teacher states:

*The head teacher has a lot of space and she does not need it. Her space is equivalent to three large classrooms and we should utilise that space for learning. The school is oversubscribed and we could do with that space’.*

It seems that a hierarchical divide is firmly in place, and as a result, teachers feel short of space. It seems that space is being used to propagate a sense of power, which may invariably lead teachers to question their occupational identity.

In one’s fieldwork it appears that teachers made a distinction between themselves and the management team, including their head teacher. In making a distinction about themselves and their management team teachers reflect on how space is distributed amongst them. For instance, during informal discussions held with teachers, in talking about their position within their institution they reflect back on their given space, for instance one teacher states: *‘This is our [teacher’s] space’... ‘This is the principal’s office’... ‘Our head of the department is in the office over there’.*

More specifically, during informal discussions held one teacher makes an explicit distinction between groups by saying:

*‘My personal impression is very clear in this institution. We have two completely unattached divisions within the institution and they are the management team and the teaching team. One way to address this, is by looking at the allocated spaces that we have in this place.’*

Is it not interesting that they feel there are two attach divisions and they see divisively and they understand the space and they allocate it on the narrative of management versus us. One could claim that space upholds a sense of in-group identity and in this narrative it suggests that this participant uses space to make such distinctions.

It also appears that the new organisational space forms and transforms the professional boundaries that span between teachers and the management team. During fieldwork held at both institutions one notices that teachers are physically separated their colleagues and hardly enjoying any interaction with them. To illustrate:

*There is no interaction across the subject areas. For example, I hardly leave this building, so I hardly get to see any other teachers outside my subject area. In that sense I feel rather isolated and this has been created by the physical space positioning.'*

It appears that teachers are mainly isolated in their departmental staffroom and classrooms. From observations at both institutions, it appears that teachers hardly leave their departmental corridor and that they are constantly working and socialising with their colleagues at their department.

## **7.7 Chapter summary**

In conclusion, with the use of Lefebvre's concepts of perceived and lived spaces this empirical chapter provides some interesting findings and highlights the tensions caused by unintended consequences of conceived space. Findings in this chapter

remind us that several narratives coexist when discussing collegiality. These narratives however reflect on teachers' experiences and reflection of the past, so in other words, they are multifaceted and constantly change. This reminds us of Ibarra's discussion on the complexities involved in identity formation, and its multifaceted nature. This empirical chapter shows that space is moulded in the occupational identity but only realising its importance to a profession when a change occurs in professional practices. In the previous chapter we looked at the narratives of pedagogy and one of the main findings is how teachers are proud of their profession and how space made them proud of it. The key theme that intertwined with the pedagogy narratives was that of collaboration. For teachers their profession is about being with people and helping each other and that collegiality plays a vital point in that. In this chapter we also explored how teachers used the personalised space to claim their space when it was taken away from them and also to uphold their in-group identity. In other words, for teachers it seemed that when their space is taken away they put a footprint on it to claim the space.

## **Chapter 8: Narratives of control and resistance from the accounts of managers and teachers and resulting ambivalence and ambiguity**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter starts by covering the important spatial issues around the formation, protection and reformation of the teaching profession, namely, narratives of control and resistance. Issues of power dynamics are revealed by scrutinising the way that the managers ‘bought’ the national narratives and ‘sold’ them to teachers, and the way teachers perceived such changes. The resulting ambivalence and ambiguity arising from teachers’ perceptions is discussed before concluding the chapter.

### **8.2 Teachers’ narratives of control and resistance**

This section focuses on teachers’ narratives of control and resistance as evidenced in my fieldwork notes and semi-structured interviews. The key focus is given to the exploration of narratives that teachers engage about the way they feel about control and surveillance, their expressions of trust, and how they show resistance to change. To address how narratives of control and resistance are lived in professional practice, Goffman’s (1959) argument of front stage and back stage is deemed useful. In particular, teachers assign meaning to the front stage (dominant space) and back stage (hidden spaces) when inhabiting the space that identifies their daily professional practices. Particular attention is awarded to observations of teachers’ social interactions, movements and narratives that happen on a daily basis at their workplace. Scrutinising the gestures, physical movements, social interactions and teachers’ narratives provides researchers with an additional perspective for understanding teachers’ narratives of how they live in their new organisational space.



### 8.2.1 *Hidden spaces*

One of the main issues that arises across the college is the lack of hidden space. The observational research at both institutions reveal teachers' daily activities and sentiments are significantly influenced by the new organisational space. This is because it appears that hidden spaces provide teachers with a sense of continuity and the new organisational space provokes questions of where their profession is going and questioning, '*who am I*' in this institution and '*what is going to happen next to my profession?*' For instance, during my informal discussions with teachers one notes teachers saying:

*'I feel I cannot get away from students'. 'I am constantly moving from A to B and being chased by students'.*

This is interesting because in the pedagogy narratives, teachers narrate the importance of being around people and they are there to help colleagues and students alike and that their profession is not just about ticking boxes. This narrative reminds us that several narratives coexist and they depend on the personal experiences. Therefore, in commenting on the significance of social interactions, busy work lifestyle teachers across both institutions emphasise the importance of hidden spaces for bolstering professional practices. It appears that the new physical spatial domain at both institutions has served to change daily social interactions.

Finding a moment to switch off and get away, teachers utilise their staffroom for a leisurely get together, especially in the morning when teachers talk about their more personal interests and seemingly avoid the discussion of more work-related issues. Similar conclusions were also drawn when discussing the narratives of collegiality

and pedagogy respectively. Living in the new organisational space to develop professional practice has led teachers to look for hidden spaces where they can steal private moments on their own or with a colleague(s). Even though teachers have their allocated desk in the departmental staffroom, they find it necessary to go and socialise with their colleagues from other departments. Teacher seemed to be aware of not letting themselves being constrained by the physical architectural changes in seeking encouragement for their community gathering and collaboration. For instance, a PE teacher at SEC states:

*'From time to time, I like to go somewhere to take a moment away from working. Don't get me wrong, I do love my job but I want to be away from there because there is a lot going on since the start of the day. Being away at the terrace for example, makes me feel I am being myself with my colleagues. I would say it is one of my favourite places to be at.'*

Much sharing of ideas and collaboration can tend to happen in a more informal setting; similar narratives came up in the pedagogy and collegiality narratives. When *'behind the scenes'* or on a break from teaching, staff can discuss both professional and personal matters in a space less prone to vigilance or interruption by student enquiry. A teacher's central gathering of spatial movement and hidden practices in the college/school is the departmental staffroom. This is a place where teachers socialise during their free time and this represents another side of a teacher's daily practices. During observations at both institutions, in the departmental staffroom teachers act relaxed, and more importantly, seem to be comfortable. It appears like a little community gathering for them to take a break, away from their busy schedule.

For teachers at NC the smoking hub is viewed as their one of the main hiding places and they look forward to it. For instance, during informal discussions with one teacher,

*‘A good thing about smoking, is that I have an opportunity to come and have a quiet time to myself and I look forward to it. It’s manic out there and we never stop, because there is always someone needing something.’*

Equally, teachers at SEC use their smoking terrace to get away and have some quiet time to themselves. This space is used on a regular basis as it is a place where they can socialise with one another without any interruptions from students or the management team. It is a ‘hiding’ place, as teachers referred to it, during their break.

One teacher states:

*‘Ahhh... I am so glad to get away from there. I can have a relaxed lunch here and it feels great.’*

Other comments were,

*‘This is my hiding space, and no student has access to this space... I love this space. Why can’t we have a roof on top of it so I can use it more frequently?’*

Another teacher adds:

*‘What I find strange about this space is the lack of social and hidden spaces. If you are lucky enough and you smoke or have a free period, then you go to the terrace and that is our only private space’.*

One could argue this teacher believes that at their new organisational space teachers do not have their hidden spaces. It appears that this teacher feels that they need to have some hidden spaces to be on their own. It is interesting to notice such narratives from this teacher because in the pedagogy narratives teachers narrated that their profession is about being there for their students but here it appears that this is not the case.

Moreover, a sociology teacher in showing the meaningfulness of the terrace took a picture of it and talked about it in interview. The picture he took is shown below in **Figure 1.**



**Figure 1 Sociology teacher at SEC talking about the terrace**

Here he shows the significance of this space by stating:

*'In this picture I am trying to show you that I think there could be more quiet hiding spaces like this one. The design of this institution has been done to try and deliver a compact organisation with limited privacy. I think this has had a negative result ... I feel that we don't have an appropriate space where teachers can hang out apart from this space which is a shame.... I would like to see more quiet and relaxing spaces like this one for us [teachers] to utilise. To be totally honest with you, I am especially disappointed that we do not have that available in this 21<sup>st</sup> century building. It is vital for teachers to have their privacy at work'*

Essentially this teacher realises the value of having a 'back stage' environment to seek a little privacy and time out. The design of the school is delivered as a compact spatial domain; however, there is definite unease about how the spatial design has formed teacher's daily practices. From these examples, one can assume that teachers realise the new structural changes adversely affected their social gathering practices, and in return they look for possible alternative options available to get around that issue.

Still, as a reason for why teachers are not so able to hide away, one teacher notes:

*'The main complaint from the inmates in there is that the staff are hiding in the staffroom, so they start screaming to get some attention. I think this hiding away is not so easy here and I think that's good and helps modern teaching.'*

Another teacher explains:

*I think because of the openness it's directed towards encouraging the client-centred approach, making the communication between teachers and students more open, encouraging interaction, not being locked away.*

Hence, from the other side of the fence, teachers need to be positioned as a more open resource themselves. It is interesting to see here that for some the new spatial design makes sense because they believe that teaching is about interacting and not hiding away so to speak. This is an example of where multiple narratives coexist and it is difficult to find a place where everyone shares the same view.

### **8.2.2 *Space communicating loss of trust***

From the narratives in this study one argues that space communicates trust between the management team and staff. In other words, it appears that changes in physical space that is professionally lived in and practised in can render the feeling of being little trusted by the management team. As change is the only constant, re-evaluations of self are expected. Such re-evaluations are indeed influenced by those in charge, which may call for a greater sense of a shared vision. However, in light of recent spatial change, one teacher at NC states:

*'My feeling is that they [management team] do not trust me as a professional and that is not healthy.'*

It is interesting how this teacher sees the head teacher as different from them and makes the assumption that the head teacher does not understand what this profession entails. For instance, one notes that teachers' do not agree with the change of space

and do not approve of all changes made by the management team. For instance, during an informal discussion with a science teacher, the teacher states:

*'I am aware of the fact that we are getting paid to educate and look after students but we should have a space of our own where we [all teachers] get together without being interrupted and being told to keep an eye on students.'*

This embodied space brings about the new way for teachers to view their management team. For this teacher having their private space is expected in their profession and that that they should be freed from being told by the management team to keep an eye on students. Interestingly, this narrative marries with the findings from the narratives of collegiality where teachers are expected to have a possession to their private space.

In addition to this, some teachers are certainly very uneasy about the lack of hidden space and the consequential increase in control and surveillance. Such visibility and control is now afforded through the use of ID cards, CCTV and other forms of surveillance technology. To illustrate teachers' unease with heightened visibility and control:

*'I understand that our safety has improved but I also feel patronised. I do not like the fact that we have to swipe our ID when we get in and out of work. I feel uncomfortable... my feeling is that they [management team] do not trust me as a professional and that is not healthy. Parents trust me with their pupils so why can't they trust me as a professional?'*

*In terms of my profession, I do not feel very comfortable swiping my card everywhere I go. Why should I? Do they need to check up on me or something? I think that is pathetic that they do not trust us. We are professionals and we know what we are doing.'*

The issue raised by the two excerpts above is that of trust. Teachers feel patronised and belittled by the heightened air of control, and seemingly demand more respect. They feel that the management team wants to keep an eye on what they do on a daily basis. Because of this they feel a strong sense of devaluation in terms of their profession and they seem to be frustrated with this change.

Equally, a business teacher articulates:

*'I do not have a problem having a swipe card with me but my concern here is that the management team want to control and see what time we come in and leave the school... I don't think they trust us.'*

In reinforcing these claims, a food technology teacher gives a fruitful example:

*'As you might have noticed from your time here... we come here before 8am in the morning and we don't leave the school till 5.30pm... I could work from home but I don't think the management team have confidence in us. They know what time we come in and go out of the school through the swipe card technology.'*

From this narrative one may argue that teachers are feeling they are being monitored and assessed and they do not feel comfortable with it. This would appear to have an



effect on their professional role because they feel that they cannot be trusted by management.

Another example where space appears to communicate a lack of trust is shown by teachers at SEC when expressing their frustration at not being able to have a microwave in their departmental staffroom. Teachers at SEC appear to be disappointed and bitter with the new policies drawn out by the management team, and especially with regards to eating hot food in their new departmental staffroom. It appears that teachers feel bitter towards the management team and complain about the fact that the head teacher does not trust them with using *'the microwave in their staffroom'* and yet parents trust them in teaching their children.

For instance, they narrate that they are *'forced to eat their hot food in the canteen'*. Teachers, it seems, are disillusioned about it. One notes teachers saying, *'Why cannot we be trusted to have a microwave in the departmental staffroom?'* Similarly, others voice that *'This management team is hypocritical. They should allow us to use a microwave in the staffroom. I am disappointed with this decision.'* Such views appear to be very strong across the college. Due to this, teachers feel they are unimportant in the college, even though they provide knowledge to the younger members of society. Interestingly a teacher from the sport department states:

*'I have a problem with the lunch thing. If I am honest, I like to have a hot lunch, and do not want to eat in the canteen with the students. I get 45 minutes of the day in which I generally want to work or prepare stuff. I am not allowed to bring hot food from the canteen and I feel that is not right. If I want to have hot food, I have to eat it in the canteen, which is the rule. We*

*used to have a microwave in there which was taken away and no staff areas have them anymore. I do find that, if we refer to professionalism, it feels like we are not trusted to use that and I don't fully understand why you are not allowed to heat up a meal. I feel I should be trusted to do that. There is a college policy that there is no hot food outside the canteen.'*

From the above excerpt one notes that trust is not afforded to teachers, and this is an important issue relating to teachers losing a sense of independence and autonomy. This narrative goes in line with the narratives discussed in the pedagogy chapter. This teacher feels uneasy about this change and claims that the management team should be able to trust teachers to have hot food in the canteen. Change has led to a particular disconfirmation of expectations, and the cause of such is attributed to management and the policies imposed by those higher up in the school hierarchy.

In addition to this, teachers throughout the college point out that the management team should have faith in teachers and that they are capable enough in using the microwave and other equipment in their departmental office. A PE teacher states:

*'We used to have a microwave in the departmental office which was taken away and no staff areas have them anymore. I do find that, if we refer to professionalism, it feels like we are not trusted by the management team to use that and I don't fully understand why you are not allowed to heat up a meal. I feel I should be trusted to do that. That is a college policy that there is not hot food outside the canteen and that is whacky for my liking'*

From the above excerpt one can argue that this teacher reflects back on what they had in the past to make sense of what is happening now. This teacher complaint about

why they are controlled on what to do and not do at their workplace. One can argue that this narrative intertwines with the pedagogy narratives where it appeared that they were proud and protective of their profession. One could argue that by imposing such controls at their workplace they feel that they are losing their jurisdictional control. That is because teachers feel that they should be trusted by the management team.

In contrast, the issue of trust at NC arises in relation to the positioning of the managerial offices. In their new organisational space the managerial offices are located next to teachers' departmental offices, which appears to be a bit of an issue for teachers. Further to this, teachers talk of trust when discussing the use of the swipe cards to enter and leave the school. Teachers complain about how they have to cross the college manager's office when entering and leaving their departmental staffroom. For instance, a graphic and design teacher in voicing this concern states:

*'I simply don't know why we have a manager's office next to my department staffroom... the only explanation for me is that the management team don't trust us teachers to go to our classrooms on time.'*

These aforementioned excerpts detail the significance of control and surveillance in how occupational identity is formed. As touched upon in the previous chapters, teacher's occupational identity is also formed through the collective/community gathering and the proximity with their colleagues throughout the institution (and not just with teachers within their department), and that they are proud and protective of their profession. This change appears to have made them feel devalued and send them seeking out a sense of continuity as part of renegotiating their occupational

identity. One notes that, in general, teachers feel that the current physical layout of the building hinders their occupational identity because they feel they are being controlled and that there is a lack of trust between teachers and the management team.

In the narratives explored during informal discussions and semi-structured interviews with teachers it appears that they resist change. Resistance is shown in two different ways: passive and active resistance. Next, this chapter explores the issue of resistance in greater detail.

### **8.2.3 *Passive resistance***

Passive resistance includes resisting the reframing space proposed by management. Teachers seemingly resisted the superimposed, planned space to create a lived space by resisting and complaining about the new change as well as by finding ways of hiding away.

As touched in the previous chapters during my observation at fieldwork and semi-structured interviews the concept of ‘hot-desking’ arose. In the narratives of collegiality this concept was touched upon it and namely in terms of how ‘hot-desking’ adversely affects the teachers’ profession. This relates to the government’s concept of ‘hot-desking’ as explored in the managerial narratives; namely, as a buzz word used by teachers themselves, which was referred to somewhat infrequently. Just to reiterate, the key notion behind this change is to ensure teachers interact with one another and that they are able to share ideas and facilities together. While all teachers at both institutions recognise the call for such change, they are hesitant as to whether such change should be the case in their workplace.

Indeed, they complain and complain about such change. From informal discussions held one teacher says *‘I do not like to work in this open space. Why are we pressured to teach in this open environment?’* It seems that they prefer to have their own private workspace to reap a quiet working environment deemed crucial for their profession. Their complaint is that by introducing space as ‘open’ and ‘shared’ there is little opportunity to prepare class and little room for them to hide away. It is interesting to see how narratives of collegiality and the narratives of passive resistance intertwine together. In the collegiality narratives there is the sense of loss, namely that of ownership of space; for the prevailing narrative analysis on control and resistance the main complaint here is that there is no space to hide away.

Gleaning data from the semi-structured interviews it appears that their core complaint is that they lose a sense of togetherness and privacy a more personalised classroom affords. For instance, one teacher who teaches some lessons in the learning resource area says,

*‘Working in this working environment is not ideal. You can see for yourself how difficult it is to concentrate in this open space. I believe this is a good area for students to learn in their own time but not to have a lesson. Again, there is no space at this college for us teachers to hide from students or from the management team, unless we go to the terrace as shown in this picture.’*

In expressing the frustration of the open shared space, this teacher refers to **Figure 2** shown below. This teacher discusses his frustration about the lack of concentration of teaching in the open shared space. This narratives suggests that this teacher is passively resisting to this change and does not feel comfortable about it.



**Figure 2 Teacher discussing lack of hiding spaces**

It appears that personal space helps teachers uphold their in-group identity and that it gives them a sense of continuity as discussed in the narratives of collegiality. For instance, one teacher talks about how she feels frustrated that she has to share pretty much everything with other teachers apart from her laptop.

Similarly, teachers at NC hold similar feelings. Teachers seemingly complain about the lack of private, quiet space to do their work such as marking and preparing their lesson plans. They will still endeavour to claim their main teaching classroom space if they have a lot work to do because their open shared office is not suitable as a working environment. What is interesting here is that they only realise the

importance of space in forming their professional daily practices when space is taken away. This is when they passively resist the change. When a physical change occurs, this introduces new daily professional practices in their workplace; teachers then start renegotiating their professional role.

In asking the new recruit teachers at both institutions with regards to the open shared space it seems that they do not fully approve of the change. Indeed, teachers are not impressed with the lack of personal space. They felt let down by this and they therefore found it difficult to fully concentrate on their work. As one of the teachers puts it,

*'I would say that this college has not kept up with its promise. It is a completely different working environment to what I initially imagined....I imagined having my personal space and desk to work on without any distraction'*

It appears that teachers at SEC do not appreciate the fact that they have to teach some of their lessons in the resource areas, space domains subject to heightened visibility and the scope for control.

In expressing their frustration as to the lack of space, teachers seem to rely on the act of resistance to change. In resisting change it appears that social gatherings and collaboration across departments is perceived to be important in the formation of a teacher's occupational identity. A teacher from the SEC expresses her concern that they are being shifted to an overcrowded space. For instance, the main staffroom is highly valued by teachers as they believe this constitutes their place to gather as a

community. A good example is gleaned from with the following excerpt by a media teacher where he states:

*‘What I’ve seen during my career is how important a staffroom is. It’s different to corporations. It’s so important that there’s a staffroom for people to get together, share information easily, even like on a little notice board. Just little things like that. There was one here previously but it got taken away and now things are being put in departments. And that has had a huge impact on the morale of teaching staff.’*

Here it can be noted how spatial design or lack of it, adversely impacts upon teachers’ morale. It appeared that teachers at NC do not fully approve of the way that the school is physically built and designed. Although this school was designed in accordance with the university campus style in mind, teachers feel it is not suitable for propagating the needs of the teachers’ community. For instance, as a social sciences teacher states:

*‘When you have a thing like humanities, sciences... that is it, you don’t have any crossover between faculties. I feel very intimidated going into sciences, because it feels like it’s their gossip quarter. You feel a bit worried walking in, in case you hear something you don’t want to hear...again this is not a good thing, as we are very isolated and segregated into our departments and it can be frustrating.’*

This narrative provides us with some interesting interpretations. One interpretation that we could draw out of this quote is that this teacher reflects on the change based on the previous experience and as a result of that comment on how it impacts their



morale. It appears that this teacher complains about it. The consequential sense of isolation and segregation amongst the staff throughout the school is a change that throws into light a new tribe effect throughout the school. This narrative intertwines with narratives of collegiality. Teachers expressed their passive resistance by discussing how they felt uncomfortable entering other departments and departmental staffroom as they do not belong to them. What is more, they do not utilise the main staffroom because teaching assistants have claimed that place due to no space being specifically allocated to them.

Furthermore, a graphic and design teacher expresses his feelings by stating:

*‘Because it you takes 20 minutes’ to walk to the hub and back again, people just tend to stick to their departmental bases. It used to be like that in the old school and I think it’s very difficult to break that...also the thought of anyone coming in to the staffroom when they are not invited, for example, and eating- I think teachers would complain about it. I think the term, ‘tribe’ would be an appropriate word to describe this, because, for example, the TA’s have claimed the ownership of the main staffroom and the departmental staffroom and the classroom is a very personal thing for the department use only. Everyone is segregated to their own departments which I don’t think is a good thing.*

Interestingly, these teacher comments on the physical distance of the ‘hub’ with his departmental office; one could suggest that this teacher interprets this change as a form of control. Ultimately, organisational space offers support that can assist in developing a sense of belonging for teachers. For that reason it appears that teachers

show a sense of passive resistance by moaning and complaining about it and this is because they see the change as a threat to their professional identity. For some teachers seem to want to resist sharing their space. To illustrate:

*'Because I host this space, I have it the way I want it. Other teachers with different working methods might come in here and sort of ruin what I've started, so I don't like to share my classroom very much. The kids can drop in anytime, but I don't like to share it with teachers very much because I feel like they will mess it up.'*

The above excerpt is indicative of a definite lack of congeniality and compatibility across teachers. This narrative contradicts what is presented in the collegiality chapter where they discuss that the profession is about being there to help their colleagues and their students accordingly. Although welcoming of students making use of classroom space, the teacher appears somewhat territorial towards the space. This is in spite of the introduction of 'hot-desking' and shared open spaces. It seems as teachers do not have the luxury of claiming their own classroom, unspoken norms and acts of territorialism may transpire. In expressing the meaningfulness of the classroom space teachers talk of their personal and professional development requirements in relation to the imaginary space they would like to see at the college.

Having explored how teachers resist passively, this chapter next focuses on how teachers actively resist changes imposed on them.

#### 8.2.4 *Active resistance*

Active resistance concerns how teachers visibly defy the rules. Of interest are the number of personal items and decorations that teachers quite visibly display throughout departments across both institutions. The attention awarded to personal decoration is evident on their personal laptops. For instance, teachers personalise their screen-savers, which include their family pictures. Furthermore, teachers at both institutions display photo frames of their children, small flower plants, and their personalised, decorated timetables.

At SEC, during fieldwork one notes teachers feeling frustrated about the lack of personalised space that they have in their department, including their classroom. Teachers sought to personalise their workplace because they feel they want to gain control of it and for it to become their territorial work space. Thus people create spaces to show or define their work identity. As such, individuals are not constantly aware of their level of work identity with a physical environment until called to reflect, and thus physical space serves as the setting for more control of social interactions in which they are actively participating.

It appears that teachers resist changes when it comes to space they identify as their territory and personally claimed space. Such restrictions make teachers seemingly seek to assert a certain level of control over their spatial domain. It appears that for teachers, space helps them to maintain a sense of control, which appears to be important for their professional role. To illustrate,

*‘But also, it is to say that this is my classroom and that you cannot just come in. Kids come in the classroom when I say so. This is my working area.’*

It is interesting to notice how this teacher has made a control of the classroom and feels that it does not belong to anyone else. This teacher has actively resisted to the change because the college policy is about sharing spaces and no one has their own personal space. In justifying the importance of the personalised space teachers narrate that they appreciate the personalised space that they have access to; indeed, it engenders a sense of belonging, indicative of their professional role. As an illustration, a media teacher says:

*'It is great that we have posters around the faculty and the classroom... it makes me feel like I belong here and represents my professional role... at the same time students feel welcome in the classroom which again is very important for me as a teacher.'*

It is interesting to note the contradiction in narratives compared to the previous one. In contrast to the previous narrative, this teacher views the space as an open resource for students and teachers to share. The one above stands in stark contrast; in particular, the narrative above is care of a teacher who claims the classroom space as 'my working area' and 'Kids come in the classroom when I say so'. This is a definitive example of how some teachers use space as a way of managing a sense of control, whereas others are seemingly enriched as teachers as they are less territorial as well as more open and prone to being able to share space with their students.

Furthermore, in the interviews held with teachers it appears that their classroom is a space that enables them to reflect on the subject being taught, and hence their identity as a teacher. For that reason they seemingly defy the rules and use the classroom space as their own whereby students are able to express themselves.

Contrary to the schools' policy, teachers assert that they host their space, and thus have no qualms in resisting the rules set out for them by management. For example, a politics teacher voices that:

*'Because I host this space, I have it the way I want it to. Other teachers with different working methods might come in here and sort of ruin what I've started so I don't like to share my classroom very much. The kids can drop in anytime but I don't like to share it with teachers very much because I feel like they will mess it up'*

One can argue that this teachers' stance differs to the above teachers' stance; namely, will share the space with students quite happily but for reasons of maintaining a sense of organisation/ spatial control, the teacher is not keen to share the space with teachers, and this is totally contrary to the aims and ambitions of those making policy.

It appeared that teachers claim that personalisation in their shared classroom and around the college is imperative for their profession. In discussion with teachers one notes teachers complaining about their current working environment and how it does not make them feel like they are working in an educational setting. For example, during my informal discussion at SEC teachers complained about their workplace as a *'plain and dull classroom with no personal touch in it.'* They further refer to their working environment as being like a *'commercial setting'* and that annoys them, and leads them to resist this change by placing posters in the classroom. For some teachers, teaching is about providing a warm and a welcoming environment. As one teacher puts it:

*‘Teaching is about having a welcoming and a warm environment for its students and staff and that is not the case when you enter this institution.’*

In the same way, teachers visibly controlled their teaching space through the use of personalised space. In the narratives of collegiality we explored how teachers claimed their personal space by personalising it to their put a foot print into it. In this chapter we explore how teachers actively resisted changing by personalising classrooms when they were told that they are not allowed to do so by the management team. In confirming the significance of the resistance of the personalised classroom for their profession, a religious studies teacher referred to the

**Figure 3** while narrating:

*‘I took a picture of a lamp and religious necklaces - Average things that you would find in a classroom. I think I did some reading a while ago that said a classroom shouldn’t be so clinical and maybe soft lighting helps to soften the mood. The little statutes I’ve brought from Athens often come up when we talk about earlier religions. And the necklace actually belongs to a member of staff’s daughter. We brought it up when we were discussing burial sites.’*



**Figure 3 A religious teacher demonstrating the significance of the personalised space**

One could argue that this teacher actively resisted changing because he believes that it is more important to personalise the classroom to soften the classroom environment than being concerned with following protocol. These narratives interrelate with the pedagogy narratives where teachers narrate their role here is to help students. For this teacher these symbols help students to learn from them and are thus resisting the written rules and regulations that deny such personalisation as set out by the management team. It could also be argued that teachers are very protective of their profession and they expect to have their own space at their disposal, which they believe they are entitled to utilise it as they please to fulfil their teaching needs.

In support of the above-given analysis, a religious teacher opts to take another picture of his personalised space in his classroom, as shown in **Figure 4** below. In discussing the importance of this picture he states:

*'Classrooms aren't just about books and PowerPoints; they can be about personalisation and creating an environment; using things that can express your teaching life. Pupils feel rewarded when I put things they've done up around my whiteboard. For example, I've got a sketch that a pupil did of me. They look at it and they smile and there's more to life than the seriousness of day-to-day teaching. It's only a little bit, but I do it to make them happy, make them smile. They love having things put up.'*



**Figure 4 A religious teacher talking about the personalised classroom**

From this excerpt one can argue that the active resistance narrated here is based on the way it bolsters the teacher's perspective on what is pedagogy for example and



how students can be suitably engage to learn more effectively. In the narratives of pedagogy we discussed how teachers are there to help students and for this teacher this is one way of helping them understanding the subject. Thus, one can argue that this teacher actively resisted to this change by providing an environment that helps his students. Again, the above narrative shows the nature of a teacher and how some are more approachable and congenial than others.

Moreover, it is clear some teachers have transformed the classroom into a personal facility, and this is apparent across both institutions. At NC, teachers tend to utilise classrooms for personal use by placing some of their belongings in them. It appears that whenever teachers consider a space to be their territory and personal domain they adapt it accordingly. To illustrate, at NC, teachers are not privy to claiming their own classroom. Still, this does not stop some teachers at the college placing their personal possessions in say, a classroom cupboard space, in an effort at marking the territory.

Thus to recap, NC school's managerial policy dictates teachers are not to place anything upon the walls, although this is contrary to what is publically declared as part of national policy. Thus to elaborate further on a theme already touched upon, in reflecting upon the importance of the personalisation of the classroom, teachers do all they can to resist such spatial change. In showing a resistance to change a geography teacher says:

*'I share this classroom with other teachers and I am not supposed to store any work, place any plants or even put any posters around in this classroom*

*but as you can see in this picture [see **Figure 5 below**] I do it and the principal has to accept this in one way or another.'*



**Figure 5** A geography teacher talking about resistance to change

Similarly, a dance teacher states:

Also a dance teacher states:

*‘As you can see from this picture [see **Figure 6 below**] I simply do not care what the principal says. This is where I teach and I will place posters round the classroom and I will leave students’ work here.*



**Figure 6 A music teacher placing posters on the wall**

Thus, from such reflections it appears that teachers at both schools view classrooms as one of their prime working locations where they take particular pride in displaying their stamp, their identity. The classroom forms a significant part of their working practice, and it provides them with a sense of autonomy, belonging, and in-group identity. In the narratives of the pedagogy we discussed how teachers felt that they educate the society and that they felt that they were losing their legitimate authority. One can argue that for teachers the personalisation of the classroom is one form showing autonomy to the head teacher(s). Because of that they actively resist the rules set by the management team so that their desired principle identity is reinstated. From the above excerpts, it appears that teachers have a strong sense of control in their classroom and ignore rules set out to them.

Interestingly, an English teacher in discussing the importance of the personalised classroom and why she resisted to the new rules she took a picture as shown in **Figure 7** below.



**Figure 7 An English teacher talking about her personalised classroom**

In discussing the significance of this picture and in justifying why she resists the new rules she articulates:

*‘This picture shows the fact that I can personalise my classroom. I can put whatever I want on the wall despite the fact that the school policy clearly says not to do that. I don’t think I am allowed to do this, but this is my classroom and I should be able to do whatever I want really. Otherwise, it is a very dull and boring space. I do not care, even if they tell me off’*

One can argue that this teacher resisted this change to stamp her own territorial space and disregards the managerial authority. The question which we need to address here

is: is this a right attitude to send out to the students? For teachers, it appears that they want keep an eye on and control their students. For instance, in the narratives of pedagogy we discussed how some teachers felt that they were losing their authority over students. In addition to this, this teacher goes on to talk about the value of her own classroom and how it makes her proud. She goes on to say:

*‘There were members of this department this year whom did not have their own classroom and they were going from class to class and that is very difficult if you do not have a base as a teacher..... I think in terms of the classroom I am proud of it. Aesthetically speaking this classroom represents my professional identity as an English teacher. ...I do not feel comfortable when other teachers come in – it is my classroom and it is my personal working space. I don’t think I have a lock on my desk and I know other teachers do have that but I know that other teachers know that this is my room and no one comes in unless they have to get in touch with me’*

From the above narrative one can argue that this teacher feels that this classroom belongs to her and that she would do anything to protect that. She takes pride in her profession, and regards the classroom as representing her identity. Subsequently the space is her classroom and she is using space to protect her sense of belonging and uphold her in-group identity; one of being an English teacher. Such narratives interrelate with the narratives of the pedagogy where we discussed how they should have control in their classroom.

There also appears to be a sense of expectation that teachers have with regards to their classroom and it appears that they have an idealised image as to what their

classroom should look like. Because of these personal values and perceptions this teachers shows an active resistance towards the recent changes. It also appears that this teacher has actively resisted the proposed concept of 'hot-desking', feeling that the classroom space is a place that solely belongs to her, rendering her to put a stamp on it so that other teachers will not use it.

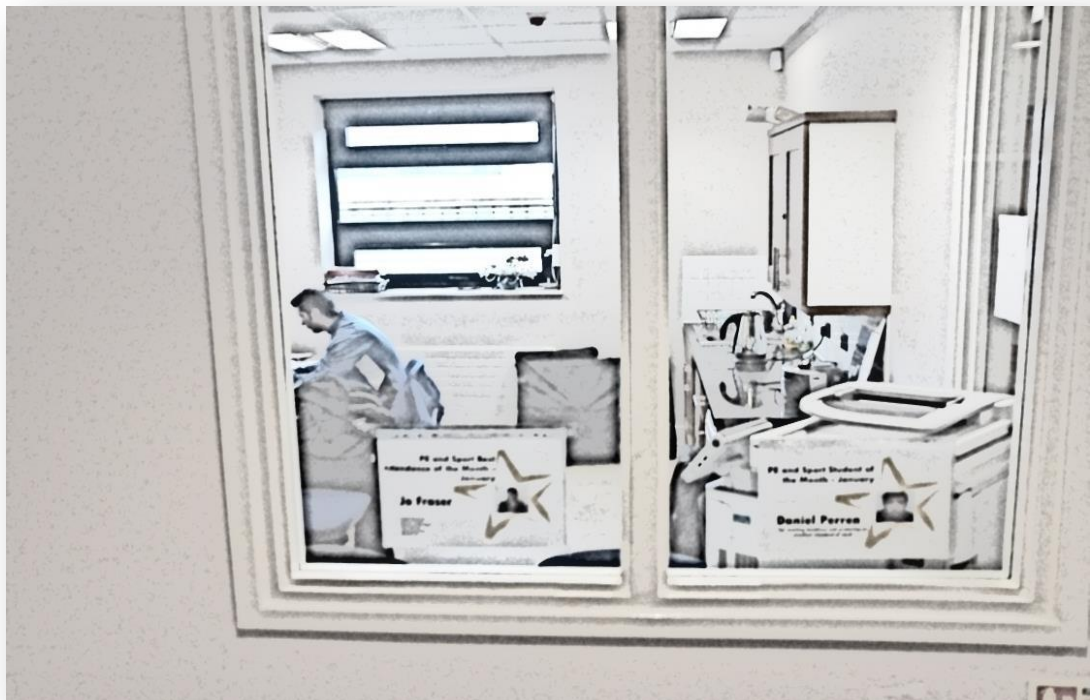
Thus, in spite of what is intended by national policy, such as 'hot-desking', as well as organisational level policy as regards to efforts to introduce room rotation and open shared space, teachers assert themselves and their identity by dismissing the wishes of management and those higher up the hierarchy. Indeed, acts of territorialism seemingly abound. To summarise, in this section we have explored how teachers actively resist to a change set out by the management team. Now we draw attention to the importance of privacy for the teaching profession.

#### **8.2.5 Privacy**

Teachers at both institutions voice the feeling of there being no such a thing as privacy within their teaching environment. During interviews held at SEC, teachers comment on the fact that their small departmental staffroom is surrounded by glass as shown in the **Figure 8** below and they feel that they are constantly being watched and controlled by the management staff and this causes added tension between teachers and the management team. During informal discussions one notes teachers moaning and feeling frustrated about the clear glass encasing their departmental staffroom and teaching classrooms. For instance, one teacher is noted for saying:

*'I would like to have my own privacy in the classroom at very least. I know how to teach, I have done it for years and I do not need this glass window. I feel it is a distraction for me and students alike.'*

Tension is caused as teachers may feel the management team should afford greater privacy to them. Maybe teachers feel the management team do not trust them. This is because teachers are protective of their social closure in the sense that they want to be left alone by the management team because they know what they are doing and do not need them to guide them through what to do.



**Figure 8 Teachers feeling uncomfortable about the class in the departmental staffroom**

Likewise, teachers comment about the glass that they have in the door of their classroom. Teachers react negatively towards this. They feel uncomfortable, as if



being watched by others whilst teaching. It appears that for them trust is an important element in the formation of occupational identity. Spatial change draws to light how in an effort to create greater openness, teachers feel much more open to scrutiny. One teacher took a picture of a classroom door as shown in **Figure 9** below and discusses how her desk is opposite the door and that people moving around the corridor can see her teaching, which she does not appreciate very much.



**Figure 9 A teacher not appreciating the class on the classroom door**

To illustrate:

*‘This is an example of how privacy at this college has changed. I feel that they [management team] have taken this to a different level. I personally do not feel that they trust me as a teacher to be in the classroom. This picture shows a glass window in my classroom door and it looks directly at my desk.*



*It makes me feel uncomfortable and that is not because I have anything to hide, because I do not. They can come and watch me teach whenever they like and I do not have a problem with it. For me it is the principle and I do not like it.'*

From these narratives one can argue that this teacher feels that the design of the building is constructed to control teachers at work. It appears that for this teacher the current change causes tension between the management team and teachers and that is because they do not feel comfortable believing that someone will randomly look at the glass window at the door. One could argue that this change makes teachers feel that they have lost their privacy that they had in the past and they are not pleased about it. This narrative leads us to explore how teachers view the surveillance at their workplace.

#### **8.2.6 Surveillance**

Still concentrating on privacy in the workplace, although teachers appreciate the fact that their workplace is very secure, they do not like the idea of swiping their cards when entering and leaving their workplace. Teachers seemingly feel uncomfortable when it comes to swiping their card to enter the main entrance of the school and their staffroom. The majority of teachers at both institutions find this to be a 'spy' approach that the management team has introduced as a control to watch over them. To illustrate:

*'In terms of my profession, I do not feel very comfortable swiping my ID card everywhere I go. Why should I? Do they need to check up on me or*

*something? I think that is pathetic that they do not trust us. We are professionals and we know what we are doing.'*

From this excerpt one can argue that this teacher shows strong feelings about having a swipe card at work. For this teacher having a swipe card is about the management team checking on what teachers do on daily basis. This teacher seems to believe that such change has diminished their profession legitimacy because he feels that there is no need for such change.

Gleaned is a sense of being scrutinised, as if under surveillance. Freedom of movement in absence of being monitored is no longer enjoyed. Indeed, CCTV aids in monitoring and curbing the misbehaviour of students. However, teachers feel their behaviour is being monitored too, as no special privileges are awarded to them, and that the status they now enjoy is more on a par with a student's status in the school (rather than the management's). At SEC, one teacher takes a picture of the security featured in the school's main entrance, and as shown in the **Figure 10** below. In describing why she picked this picture specifically, she said how *'this is an example of working in a city firm, where everything is watched and monitored. This should not be the case in the teaching environment.'*

In elaborating further, she states that:

*'As we can see in this picture.... I believe that the management team have produced a clever technique to monitor when teachers come to the college. I am a professional and I should be trusted to do my work properly....Strictly speaking between us, I find this approach very disturbing. I am not comfortable with this at all'.*

Upholding the narrative of feeling monitored, more visible, and controlled, attribution for change is awarded to managerial decision-making. This turn of events leaves the teacher feeling somewhat disturbed and encroached upon, defeating the object of more national level policy-making, which has sought to bring about a more level playing field spanning teachers and management in schools.



**Figure 10 Security entrance at SEC**

Teachers at NC also point out the fact that they have to be at school by 8am and cannot leave the school until 5pm, even though at times they do not have a lesson and could easily work from home. Hence, in the national policy-making pursuit for introducing greater flexibility to new and modern learning environments, teachers feel the heightened incidence of visibility and control render little scope for their flexibility or autonomy. In the interviews one teacher states:

*‘To be honest with you I feel I have been watched every time I move around the school. It makes me very uncomfortable in knowing that someone watches my moves. This is a learning environment and they [management team] should have faith in us.... I wonder whether there is some sort of technology monitoring how many times I go to the toilet.’*

From the above quote it appears that this teacher is very cautious of her daily activities and movements at college. This is a cause for concern; namely because such change may have a negative effect on a teacher’s sense of self, and this can cause further tension between teachers and their management team.

Teachers undeniably feel that the management team now control their movements and their behaviour at their workplace. This is a similar story for teachers at both institutions. The CCTV cameras around the buildings and the buildings layout plus their positioning in their departmental staffroom are key factors that fuel discomfort. For instance, teachers at SEC are frustrated with the way that their management team controls them. For example, some teachers feel:

*‘The management team, including the principal of the college should not constantly observe our behaviour. We are professionals and we would like to be treated like one of them’.*

Again, from this narrative, this teacher feels that the management team is controlling them because of the CCTV. It is interesting to notice how the CCTV system is viewed differently when appraising the narratives of pedagogy and work. In that chapter, safety was viewed important for their profession and arguably CCTV is part of that; yet in these narratives of control, the CCTV system is viewed differently.

This suggests that narratives are situational and multifaceted and are open to different interpretations.

To conclude: these findings suggest that in an effort to reclaim their identity and assert themselves as individuals in need of rest and recuperation, teachers seemingly award special meaning to their spaces that they utilise on a daily basis. Social gathering and seeking a sense of belonging is perceived as important when forming one's occupational identity, as it provides teachers with a sense of continuity. Here we have explored the way that narratives are situational, and how we give different meanings to changes based on the reflection of the past. What is more, we have shown that space plays an important role in the communication of trust between teachers and the management team. Resistance in this section has been narrated as active and passive. For teachers, space is a way of protecting their territorial jurisdiction and professional identity. Here we have also explored how teachers felt about losing the privacy that they had had in the past, and their feeling that at their new organisational space they are under surveillance at all times.

### **8.3 How the managers 'bought' the space conceived by the national narrative and 'sold' the changes to the teachers**

Thus far we have discussed the way that space changed teachers' way of teaching and how it intertwined with their professionalism. In this section, by utilising Lefebvre's conceived and perceived space, we move a step further and explore the way that organisational space was introduced and 'sold' by the government, and the way that managers (in this instance head teachers) interpreted the national narrative and 'sold' it to teachers. In doing so, we gain a comprehensive understanding of how

national narratives were interpreted by the head teachers and how they were sold to teachers.

Referring back to documentary data, it appears that the government has identified that there is an issue in the teaching environment and profession, and that they feel a sense of responsibility to address it. Therefore, it would be interesting to see how this change is brought into everyday life at the organisational level by the head teachers.

### ***8.3.1. National conceived space***

At national level it appeared that the government are confident that the new organisational space will improve and fit with the teaching ethos, the main idea being to make teachers work more collaboratively, to change teaching practices and to remove ‘unhealthy dichotomies’. For example:

*‘The reports from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) have stated that as many as 1 in 5 schools in England has accommodation that is in such an unsatisfactory state, that the delivery of the curriculum is affected.’*

*‘The ambition for a learner-led, personalised, flexible, innovative, education philosophy, which has no boundaries, and has removed unhealthy dichotomies, is represented and fulfilled through the new architectural space design. Historically, buildings have been designed to suit an education fad. The old buildings provide a clear separation between the management and teachers. There is a need for a development in collaboration within the teaching profession.’*

From the above quotes the government are using dominant and yet convincing discourses to justify the reasons for change. They base their line of argument on what Ofsted says about school accommodation in England. Their central argument here, as discussed in the previous chapter, is that the old buildings did not reflect the '*new modern teaching*' approach. The new teaching approach as discussed in the previous chapter involves flexible teaching practices, and flexible and more collaborative professional practices amongst teachers. Here we notice that the government mention their ambition to improve '*education philosophy*', and use words such as improving teaching collaboration to sell their rationale for this planned transition.

As such, there is an assumption by the government that by changing and adapting organisational space they will improve teaching practices. For example:

*'We need a new understanding of the pedagogies appropriate for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century education system. Traditional methods have not achieved enough. The wider availability of new technology provided by the BSF programme, means that we have both the opportunity – and the responsibility – to explore new approaches to teaching and learning. The familiar and effective teaching methods of listening, reading, writing and class discussion will of course remain important, but our teaching institutions ought to be advancing beyond the traditional formats that are still so prevalent.'*

From the above quote, it can be argued that this is a functionalist perspective. This functionalist perception of thinking can be traced back to Marxism and unfolding issues around teaching, and space being a productive entity in the lives of teachers

and in the overall functioning of educational institutions. It would be interesting, however, to see how the narratives of residents who use these spaces align with the government's vision of 21<sup>st</sup> century education. It is clear that the government believe that there is a need for collaboration in the teaching profession. It would suggest that even their own assumption is that the change of space would lead to improved collaboration within the institution. Therefore, it would be interesting to see whether this actually happens in practice and how this change is being interpreted by head teachers.

Scrutinising documentary data, it appears that the government provide powerful discourses concerning the need for using and engaging with technology. For example:

*'ICT is already transforming the shape of teaching and learning across all subjects and ages. Not only are children being taught in new and exciting ways, but they are learning new skills to enable them to participate in our changing society and economy. Teachers are also seeing significant changes beyond the classroom. We are making sure that by having the BSF programme, we will achieve our radical vision of ICT in schools of the future.'*

*'The aim of this new and exciting building was to be able to cope with the uncertainty of future pedagogies. Innovation and quality is embraced, both in design and management of education and teaching in this project. This is because this building provides outstanding ICT facilities and adaptable*



*spaces for learning. It also offers a warm and friendly teaching and learning environment.'*

From the above quotes, it would appear that this is an ideological perspective, meaning that space is utilised as a medium and means of obtaining better output from pupils and teachers in those environments through the use of ICT, for example, alongside the design of space which is the building. The manner in which these projects are designed is aimed at constructing a vision of society which builds on the notion of constructivism in the way that people use their power to shape the discourse, or the way that people envision the educational environment. As a result, teachers are expected to behave in a particular way because of the social construct which is embodied within this perception.

### ***8.3.2. Perceived space: using the dominant discourse to 'manage' change***

Interestingly, such dominant narratives were reproduced by head teachers at both institutions. It appeared that both head teachers were influenced by and adapted government policies at their institutions, and sold the change in line with what was said at the national level. Their focus was on the teaching ethos and work practices. For example, the head teacher at North College states:

*'One of the key drivers behind this change was about making teachers feel valued and tackle the unhealthy dichotomy that we have had for many years in education. We have had open discussions and have listened to their [teachers] concerns and we think we have delivered on that. I would argue that this college has made some radical decisions in improving teachers'*

*work practices and I think that is noticeable when walking around the college.'*

From the above quote we notice the head teacher is selling this change as being about teachers, for example, she believes that this change makes '*teachers feel valued and tackles the unhealthy dichotomy*' a similar claim made by the government. This claim in itself is powerful, and fits with the teaching ethos as discussed in the previous chapters.

Equally, by mentioning '*radical decisions*' the head teacher is assuming it would cause changes in the way the things are done. This reinforces the functionalist way of thinking about space which is achieved through the use of power to determine a particular way of behaviour within institutions. Here she achieves that through the redesign of architectural space and social space. This is a form of mechanisation of behaviour within institutions. She has mechanised space and has blinded herself to the complexity of space and particular real-life practices. Hence, it would be interesting to see how this change affects real-life practices.

Despite being viewed as a '*radical decision*' this was seen as necessary change in line with the Ofsted report. For instance, the head teacher at South East College states:

*'I am very excited with the outcome of this project. I was involved from the start to the finish and I believe we now have an outstanding learning and working environment. The new architectural space represents the transformation in the education which was very much needed. Ofsted were critical of our previous building and our college was categorised as*

*inadequate in terms of its physical environment. In this new building, we have succeeded in changing that, and I am very pleased about it.'*

From the above quote, we see that the head teacher sees the Ofsted report as a central document shaping teaching practices in England. Ofsted's findings should be embraced and this is what he did in his institution by changing the building to make it more adequate, in line with Ofsted. By succeeding in making the planned changes he felt the project was a successful one.

### **8.3.3 Head teachers' perceived space**

Head teachers understood and were aware of the fact that the government have set a clear target in their initiative. They (head teachers) wanted to promote this target, as they referred to the '*modern teaching approach*'. For both head teachers this change was achieved through the introduction of '*independent learning, the introduction of ICT, a flexible learning environment and meeting 21<sup>st</sup> Century*' learning demands. As a result, for each of them their new building was designed with the aim to meet such demands. For example, the head teacher at North College states:

*'I have personally put a lot of effort into this project and I have tried to adapt to the national policy sent to us by the government. There has been hard work and consultations with teachers and architects put into this process and I believe that we have managed to achieve something exciting. I am confident that teachers will agree with me on that.'*

This quote suggests that the head teacher is using dominant discourses that reflect the teaching ethos to sell this transition. For example, she mentions that she has

followed government policies, which for her appear to be fundamental in implementing these changes. It could also be argued that she functions from a unitarist view of power as she believes in justifying the reason she made such changes and particular decisions from her positional power. She seems convinced that the visible power between the management team and teachers at the workplace could be easily removed by the new organisational space. Thus, the important question here is: does this happen in reality?

Stating that *'I am confident that teachers will agree with me on that'* is another representation of the functionlist/unitarist view of power, and she appears certain that any contradictions would be resolved without any major problem/resistance when she says, *'We did have some individuals disagreeing with our plans and our views, but we have tried to address their concerns in this process.'*

During the discussion with the head teacher at South East College, he claimed that he has a good relationship with the teachers and that he was open to listen to their views and provided an opportunity for teachers to get involved in the new proposed changes. It appears that he believes he has involved teachers in this project and that their views were taken on board when implementing that change. At the same time, he was aware of the fact that some individuals would not agree with his decision but that he has tried to fulfil their requests. For example:

*'I feel that I have a good relationship with teachers here. They are always invited to represent their views before a new change is implemented at this college. I personally feel that teachers were involved in this transition, their*

*views were taken on board and we have tried to deliver on them. I am aware of the fact that I cannot please everyone and we have to live with that.'*

From this quote, it is arguable that he appreciates the fact that these changes are contested and raise differing views and reactions from different participants. Yet, despite being aware of the fact that this change does not please everyone at this institution, he sees himself in the position to make the final decision. What he is doing here is identifying issues around the change but choosing deliberately to not act upon them.

In a similar vein, the head teacher at North College states:

*'This has been a really difficult and a challenging transition. At the end of the day, the school had to make a strategic decision and we came up with what we thought was an appropriate one. We listened to the teachers' concerns. We feel that we understood them and we have done what we can to represent their [teachers'] concerns.'*

#### **8.3.4 Perceived space: we want to be a big family**

In reflecting back on head teachers' narratives about this transition, it appeared that they acknowledged that teachers' profession revolves around caring about their students, and that communication and collaboration amongst colleagues is important for their profession. More importantly, using words such as '*we feel we understood them*' would suggest this head teacher is making a clear distinction between the management team and teachers, and is justifying the power used in making the final

decision. As such, they believed that the new organisational space provides just that. For example a head teacher at North College states:

*'We acknowledge that teachers, as professionals, care about the students they teach. They also care about their education as a whole, and certainly care about their relationships with students and colleagues. Also, it goes without saying that they care about progression in their profession. I feel that the design of this building helps achieve just that. For example, we now have departmental staffrooms where teachers can socialise with each other. We also share spaces with each other and I believe that improves teachers' collaboration because they have an opportunity to see and communicate with each other.'*

From this quote it is arguable that this head teacher provides a powerful narrative in favour of change based around a caring profession. It shows that she cares about teachers and is reflecting on and fulfilling their perceived demands. This is a powerful discourse and her claims are in line with the teaching ethos as we have discussed in the previous chapters. Here she is justifying her reasoning for change – in line with Ofsted's findings and justifications – and is selling this change as being made to improve the teaching environment and to improve collaboration amongst each other. The statements '*we now have departmental staffrooms*' and '*we also share spaces with each other*' conveys her perception of the school being one 'big family' and that everyone is part of this.

Furthermore, during the discussion with both head teachers, they reflected back on their rationale for the change and they justified their decision-making. The

assumption behind the change was that the head teachers believed this is one of the key aspects that needs changing and implementing in their new organisational space.

For example, the head teacher at North College states:

*‘In this transition, I have started by reassuring every teacher that they had a say on the new organisational space. I have tried to make them feel valued, have explained the benefits of the change and discussed why we were wanting change and how we are going to do that. I have listened to their views and have delivered on that. I feel that has had a positive effect in the staff.’*

Equally, the head teacher at South East College states:

*‘We realise and acknowledge that we are all in this together, and we have to work together otherwise this transition will simply not work. I strongly believe we have done that in this change and I feel that teachers have had their say and input.’*

Both of these quotes are yet another illustration of the notion of ‘one big, happy family’ in which members are valuable parts of the institution. These quotes also suggest the prevalence of power amongst those sharing the space because of the strategic decision. The question here is: what is ‘strategic decision’? It would suggest that in this instance it is to maintain certain power structures/regimes in her behaviour. What is interesting however from the above quotes is the issue of the strategic decision-making which often encodes a particular sense of principle within which power then is embedded. They are statement power – position power. We notice that the head teacher at North College states *‘I have tried to make them*

*valued*’ which would suggest she had the power in making the change and that she has explained why she has made the changes. Equally, we notice that the head teacher at South East College provides strong and positive narratives in favour of change. His belief is that they have to work together (the management team and teachers) to make this happen. Interestingly, however, what we notice here is that both head teachers fail to acknowledge the downside of such changes.

Therefore, referring back to Lefebvre’s thinking, we conclude that the government and head teachers alike sold the conceived and perceived space to teachers based on the importance of students’ engagement and student success. At the same time, in this section we notice that head teachers do not acknowledge the downside of the changes, and they use dominant discourses to sell the planned changes. Their discourses fit with the teaching profession ethos and they provide determinist views of the changes.

The notion and the philosophy behind the new organisational space is one that envisions output in extension of, or better than, the previous one. It would appear that both the government and the head teachers have taken a functional view on this change, in the sense that the new changes in the organisational space will have a positive effect on the teaching profession. The key speakers in the process of this change therefore adapt that vision and that view about space in a positive, objective dimension and this was expressed in the narratives used. Through that construction process a narrative is embedded in the way that space is discussed from a functionalist perspective. Thus, what we learn from this section, which is rather interesting, is the hidden and underlying power structures within these narratives which was seldom verbalised in concurrent discussions. For that reason, it would be



interesting to see how a visit to the site reveals what social interpretive engagement is happening at the micro level in terms of reality.

#### **8.4 How the teachers perceived and lived these spatial changes and the power dynamics that ensued**

In the previous section we have discussed how the discourse of managers is driven by the discourse of imposed systems of power. To make sense of this spatial change Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space is useful because it helps us make sense of tensions and contradictions towards new changes. Equally, it is crucial that we understand the narratives in which teachers perceive these changes imposed by their management in relation to their daily professional practices. In doing so, here we explore how such changes have an impact on their professional identity, and the effect on their daily practices. From Ibarra's (1999) study, we argue that identity is situational and temporary. This concept is useful here to make sense of teacher's identity, and how they perceive the change in space in relation to their construction and reconstruction of their professional practices within the workplace. In this way, we make sense of teachers' belonging, and their utilisation and sharing of the new organisational space.

Within this section we explore the lived experienced of teachers, where it appears that they were less involved in implementing the changes, and the decision-making which led to the designing of the new organisational space. It would be interesting to make sense of the tension and underlying power issues that most often surface in an interpretative research. Therefore, in order to make sense of this power relation from the interpretive perspective we need to make sense of what teachers have to say

about their profession. How do they see themselves within those systems of professionals – their interrelationship with managers, their space utilisation and issues around power relations?

#### ***8.4.1. Professional image destabilised in the new space***

Interestingly, teachers' evaluation of the change contrasts with how this was represented by the head teachers. During the field work it appeared that teachers felt the change was imposed on them without taking into account their views and concerns. For example, a history teacher at North College says that:

*'I cannot believe I spent that time and effort for nothing. Why did they make us express our views when they knew what they were doing?'*

Thus, this would suggest that this teacher understands that the change in space is a political move and is not happy about it. For example, by stating 'make us express our views' and 'they knew what they were doing' this teacher acknowledges that they (teachers) are a different group from the management team and they (teachers) have no influence or power in decision-making. Equally, this teacher is seemingly convinced that the management team have had their own agenda in decision-making and they are using their position of power in pursuing that.

Similar views became apparent during the semi-structured interviews. In reflecting back on teachers' narratives of this transition it appeared that they felt that they were powerless in making the changes that they wanted. For example, a media teacher at North College states:

*'When the proposed change was discussed, we were asked to state our concerns and we expressed our views. However, although we felt that we were involved in the discussion of the process of change, it makes me wonder whether it was a waste of time, because I feel that our proposed planned changes are not represented in the existing building.'*

This quote suggests that this teacher felt he was betrayed by the head teacher and that he has not received what he hoped for. As such, this teacher feels that they (teachers) were powerless in making the desired changes and that they wasted their time. This raises the question to what extent were teachers involved in the consultation – and the value of consultation in general. The head teacher's narratives suggested that teachers were involved in this change and their views were taken into account. From this quote it would suggest that teachers felt that the management team had made up their mind about what to change and how to change it before the discussion took place.

As such, it appeared that such changes have caused tension between teachers and the management team. For instance, a sociology teacher at North College states:

*'This transition has caused conflict between the staff and the management team but we stood by our decision because this is our space and we should use it how we want it. We inhabit this space and not our leader.'*

This quote suggests that teachers perceive themselves as having power over the management team and the staff are very powerful in their context. For example, saying *'we stood by our decision'* and *'this is our space'*, apart from making a clear distinction from *'us'* and *'them'*, would suggest that they have power over the head

teacher and are resisting what the head teacher wants them to do. In other words, this teacher is saying, ‘we will do what we want to do with this space and what can you do about it?’

As well as discussing the process of change, teachers at both institutions also questioned the content of it. They felt that this was an unnecessary change and believed that it would not work at their workplace. For example an English teacher at South East College states:

*‘This is an old notion that was originally introduced in the USA in 1980s and we are copying their concept. What is the point of it? We know that in the USA this is not working and they are going back to the closed environment. Surely that must say something about hot-desking?’*

It could be argued that this teacher is showing an understanding of what has been imposed upon them rather than perceiving it as a positive thing. It appears that this teacher is against the idea of the open space, and gives her account based on what has happened in the USA. It would appear that the teaching profession is driven by government policy but more importantly, this teacher realises that there is inscribed power in the policy and they do not have power to say no. This is contradictory to what was portrayed in the previous chapter where the government and head teachers visualised their change as being understood as a positive change. This teacher realises this issue, and just because she is going ahead with what has been imposed on her it does not mean that she is accepting that policy. Thus, it is arguable that this teacher is rather following this power symmetry.

#### **8.4.2. Understanding imposed planned change on space**

Equally, teachers at both institutions were aware of the ‘*modern teaching approach*’ but were unclear and sceptical as to why they needed to adapt and follow the rules. For example, a geography teacher at South East College states:

*‘There is a sense that teachers have to follow this notion of a ‘modern teaching approach’ and I am not sure where this is coming from. We have been told that the new building is designed in such a way that meets that demand and we have to adapt to it. I fail to understand why we [teachers] have to follow such rules and adapt to what the government and the head teacher wants us to do. They do not understand what the reality is in the classroom and how teaching takes place. So, how can they come up with such fancy thoughts?’*

In this quote we notice that this teacher is aware of the new modern approach and believed that the government have not consulted with them about what modern teaching entails. In terms of power dynamics this teacher feels frustrated because he feels that he does not have the power to make decisions on what to teach and how to teach, but rather it is imposed upon him by the management team. Here we are seeing this teacher feeling frustrated because of the loss of the power. It can be argued that this teacher is feeling frustrated because he is losing his own identity as a teacher. It would suggest that control and power is important for this teacher. This is another prime example showing how power is imposed on teachers in terms of what they do and how they have to do it.

During the field notes and interviews with teachers they discussed the reasons as to why they went into teaching in the first place and discussed the importance of interactions in the profession. For instance, a drama teacher at North College states:

*'The reason why I have joined teaching is because I like the idea of working with children and being able to influence their future prospects... I love doing that along with the interaction that you get in this profession. What is annoying here, however, is that since we have moved to this new building, I feel that we do not get the interaction that we used to have before and that is because of the open shared space that we have here. I feel that colleagues do not connect together and I do not feel that there is a sense of collegueship like it was in the past. Whether that has to do with the design of the new physical environment, for example being in an open office plan or the way that teaching profession is changing, I do not know, and cannot answer that question.'*

From this quote we notice this participant giving his account as to why he decided to become a teacher and arguing that teaching is about working with children and being able to make a change to students. This teacher recognises that the new transition at their workplace has diminished the interaction with his colleagues. It appears that this is a dividing rule for this teacher. In terms of power dynamics, it could be argued that this teacher feels that the management team is dividing staff into small groups because it is easier to manage. This teacher is reflecting back on what it was like at his old workplace and realises that he used to see people regularly but now he does not. This could be viewed as being a political decision. The physical space has created curriculum areas, and curriculum areas have been created to provide a base

for people to work within their groups. From the identity perspective we can see that the new change has created sub-identities within the institution. Here we have seen a breakdown of staff power because the majority of teachers do not use their power at the same time. Isolation is a mental state. The head teacher has a position of power. He has impacted in the working environment, and he has tried to justify what he has done. What has not been said here is that if you are at a lower level in the hierarchy, at the teaching level that is where we need to figure out what has been said in practice. What this teacher is doing is questioning and recognising space as being used by the management team as a tool in making a change in the teaching profession.

#### ***8.4.3. Lived space: making sense of conceived space through lived experience***

Teachers at both institutions questioned the notion of open space and questioned the distribution of space by attaching it to ‘symbolic’ use of power. For example, in reflecting on the notion of open space and the power dynamics behind it, a science teacher at North College states:

*‘The head teacher has a lot of space and she does not need it. Her space is equivalent to three large classrooms but yet we [teachers] have to operate in a hot-desking environment. We should utilise that space for teaching and learning. Also, the school is oversubscribed and we could do with that space.’*

From the above quote it could be argued that space has created a system of power in terms of assigning particular offices and particular individuals to particular offices. These manifest the hierarchical distribution of people within particular structures of power. In this instance, it appears that this teacher disapproves of the space that their

head teacher has at her disposal and believes that space would be better utilised for learning. The introduction of hot-desking is a political decision because it is preventing the staff from having their own space. They did not have to do that but they did and this seems to be a political decision. You would lose control of your own identity as a teacher and providing an office-free environment is a political decision. Lack of an office is considered to be symbolic of status because those who have offices (managers) have power within the organisation.

Teachers recognise the fact that there are power dynamics between themselves and the management team, and they acknowledge that these are represented through the use of space. For instance, a drama teacher at South East College states:

*'My personal impression is very clear. In this institution, we have two completely unattached divisions. There are the management team, and the teaching team. One way to establish this, is by looking at the allocated spaces that we have at this place. That would tell you everything about it.'*

From this quote, it would appear that space plays an important role in establishing the power dynamics between teachers and the management team, and this teacher is reflecting on space as a tool to explain how they are divided amongst each other. For this teacher the distribution of space has a political motive, and it affects the way they see the management team.

The frustration of imposed change does not stop here. Teachers were frustrated with the way that the management handled the change. For example, a religious teacher at North College states:



*'I feel that the issue here is that teachers tend to disagree with the management systems and not with the actual change. I feel like, why have I been told what to do and how to do things? Surely as a teacher, I would know how to teach in the classroom? I can't stand being told to do something by the management team without them having a comprehensive understanding of it, because they [management team] do not know the details that goes on in the classroom. They are not there to know and understand the reality.'*

This teacher feels uneasy with the new change and believes that the management team cannot understand what goes in the classroom, and that it should be up to teachers to decide how to deliver their lessons. Here we notice this teacher referring to the management team as '*them*' which would suggest they see themselves as a different group. This teacher suggests that there is a clear division between teachers and the management team, and this is contradictory to what the head teacher believes to be the case. It could be argued that this teacher sees something has been imposed on them. It appears to be a classic example of power dynamics whereby power is exercised by someone with a position in the hierarchy. It is arguable that this is a power demarcation of different hierarchical systems or individual use of space because he now has been told what to do and has no power to say no to such change(s). This teacher felt that they are no longer valued as academic teachers. Shaping their lives and classrooms is done by people who have no understanding of what they have to do. That is another example of positional power whereby a teacher feels disempowered because their teaching practices have been performed by other people.

In emphasising the segregation, lack of communication and lack of understanding of the management team towards the teachers' profession, teachers discussed the lack of consultation that took place in this transition. For example, a dance teacher at South East College states:

*'We know what we're doing in the classroom but no one really consults us about what would be a good change. There's a certain arrogance in the management team that they have an answer for everything that goes on in the college. I think the management here are far too divorced from any understanding of what these students are like and what they're going through. If I could, I would recommend that management do more teaching. The deputy head teacher here does no teaching at all! Even shadowing a teacher would be good to see some of the pressures. I don't think there's real understanding of pressures on teachers or students alike.'*

This is an example where the participant acknowledges that the management team does not know much about teaching. This participant argues that the management team need to be involved in teaching before they impose such changes. This teacher believes that there is a 'divorced' relationship between teachers and managers and as such they do not understand teachers' needs. Again, the use of the word 'arrogance' would suggest that teachers and managers do not have a positive and a close relationship, and contradicts what was said by the head teachers as discussed previously. It would suggest that the management team have the power to impose the changes even without the teachers' approval. This is an example of power control, showing how teachers should behave, how teachers have to work and to deliver output through systems that condition teachers to behave in a particular way.

It appears that teachers assume that the deputy head teacher has forgotten what it is like to teach in the classroom. They believe that the management make decisions based on government policy whilst ignoring the reality aspect of it. Therefore the policy, which is designed as a fixed instrument, will always be altered within the reality of space utilisation, which would suggest it is never fixed but rather is in flux and constantly changing.

Similarly, during the fieldwork and interviews with teachers it appeared that autonomy was an important factor for their profession. It appears that teachers were of the opinion that head teachers are using these funds to devise organisational structures which work for them in meeting their needs, which are about meeting set targets and are driven by results. It appears that is causing changes in performance in practice, and this is impacting on the sense of identity. For example, a geography teacher at North College states:

*'At this college, we are so concerned and focused in meeting the targets set by the management and Ofsted. The new space is designed in the way that pleases them... teachers have no say in how teaching is delivered and students are expected to have a laptop with them for every lesson which I feel hinders my professional autonomy.'*

This participant believes that the management team and teachers have different expectations. For him, the management team is concerned with meeting targets, whereas for teachers, autonomy in what they teach and how they teach is important for their professionalism. This teacher believes that the design of the new organisational space is designed to fulfil the management team needs. This

contradicts what was perceived by the managers where both head teachers failed to notice the negative effect of this transition.

Therefore, autonomy is important for teachers and they think they have it – when discussing that they have been controlled by what they teach is a sense of loss of power. Because they no longer feel that they are autonomous because they have lost control of that space which is very important for them. Autonomy is about power in the workplace and about making decision on your own and by yourself without any external pressure, and it appears that this is not the case here.

Having said that, teachers realise there is a lot of politics in their teaching profession that is affecting their professionalism. For instance, an English teacher at North College states:

*‘I certainly feel that teaching has changed from when I was taught. I think there’s more pressure from external bodies. From the government, right down to all the different governing bodies. I think the outside pressure on teaching is extreme. I don’t think I ever realised how bad it was, until I actually got into the industry itself. Some of it is quite alarming, in terms of the amount of pressure put on teachers. I think that’s a negative side of teaching. I don’t know if it was like that when I was younger.’*

From this quote we notice this participant is aware of the fact that there is a lot of politics in the teaching profession. As such, she recognises the fact that there are political movements towards change and there are a number of ‘external bodies’ that impact on change. Thus, this teacher is suggesting that there is a top down power dynamic and that all external bodies have some sort of power in decision-making.

She is also suggesting that in order to make sense of the pressure that teachers are under ‘we’ have to have been in their position.

#### **8.4.4. *Tensions between conceived and lived space***

There was a sense that teachers felt there were political powers at work within the decision-making and the changes made in their college, and that they did not agree with their policies. For instance, a graphic design teacher at North College states:

*‘I think the policies pursued in this college, and nationally, are military and punish negative behaviours and increase them. I think all policies should be based on rewarding the positive, instead of punishing the negatives. I don’t think college policies are based on national statistics and national research. I think that’s one of the biggest things I find myself saying here. “Why don’t they look at research?” There’s stuff about kids’ learning behaviour, and they would know better. I just don’t understand it. We’re asking the kids to do research, and we’re not doing it to find out how we can make our profession better.’*

This teacher is expressing frustration of the lack of attention paid to the teaching profession. It suggests that the management team are more concerned with negative punishment than positive reward, and that that should not be the case. For this teacher, their institution is following national policies in decision-making. It would suggest that the decisions of the management team and the government are not reflecting the ‘national statistics and national research’, and that is having an impact in the development of their profession and is questioning that behaviour.

In reflecting on how the new transition is affecting the teaching profession, teachers reflected on their old workplace. They perceived that the management team have used space as a tool to create sub-identities. It would appear that teachers are being split up and this is being given a political interpretation. For instance a business teacher at South East College states:

*'It is sad to see this project failing to maintain its high expectations. When this building was planned, we were told that we [teachers] would have a great friendly teaching environment and a great community. I cannot see that happening in here. In that, we were better off at the old building. Although the old building was outdated, I give you that, we had that sense of feeling part of the college, where everyone socialised together.'*

From this quote we notice this participant reflecting back on the old building to reflect on the change. It appears that the head teacher promised to do one thing but in reality did something else. It appears that teachers did not have any power in making that change and this is another example where teachers narrate change differently to what was portrayed by head teachers. This participant argues that although they were promised they would have a '*friendly teaching environment*' she does not think that they have achieved that, and does not have high hopes for changing that in the future.

Reinforcing the important of space in the teaching profession, a dance teacher at North College states:

*'I think historically, teachers have always believed that they own a certain amount of space. To a certain extent, you could say there's a tribal aspect.'*

*But when you create faculties, you create a sort of tribal imagery. Then giving spaces in those departments you're reinforcing the stereotypical tribal aspect.'*

It could be argued that from this quote the notion of 'tribe' in itself is a notion of division, and the notion of possession of your own department or your own building is contradictory to the collegial and collaborative notion portrayed by the head teachers. As such, we can notice how power dynamics have spread out within the teachers and that is something that has not been accepted by teachers. Teachers have their own 'imaginary space' for their profession that they like to pursue in practice, and the management team will find it difficult to change teachers' 'imaginary' thoughts of their professional space.

To conclude, from Lefebvre's perspective on space, in this section we have shown that there are differences between conceived, perceived and lived spaces and this leads to tension. Teachers felt that there is a natural discontent with managers, and their authority to call the changes in teaching practices is questioned. This is because they felt that the managers do not know anything about teaching, indeed some managers at schools are people who cannot teach. Teachers are being told what to do all the time and they feel uneasy about it. The managers see teaching as a straightforward profession and what we are picking up here is the natural belief that the power from above is forced upon teachers in an attempt to shape their classroom activities and it is a top down change.

From the space-action debate, we explored how space can be used as a tool for imposing political changes. For example, here we discussed the interpretations of

planned changes as conceived by the government and the management and we have noticed the conflicts between conceived and lived spaces. These conflicts have implications for the teaching profession. This is because teachers have power and autonomy in their profession which is important for them, and they are protective of their profession. It would suggest that there is inscribed position and knowledge power, and that they believe the managers should not have the whole power in making such decisions. What we notice here is the tension and contradiction between the managers' vision and the teachers' response towards the new organisational space. As such, these differences can be understood in terms of Lefebvre's (1991) conception of space, arguing that space cannot be treated as 'neutral', and a Foucauldian view of power which seems to contrast with a functionalist objective perception of reality.

From the different responses to the implemented changes, we have seen that there are different positions taken by different groups. The problem that we have noticed here is that the people at the top want to change working practices at the bottom, but they do not have the power to do it. For example the government and head teachers have attempted to control teachers by separating them into sub-groups, and they have done this through the design of the new space. What we notice here is that by changing the physical space they cannot directly control them. Fundamentally they need that change and they cannot direct that but they can direct it through the curriculum but still cannot get teachers on any day to teach in a certain way. To achieve that change they have to create the right conditions and something else has to do it. 'Something else' is the school/institution, and the head teachers create new systems but they cannot control every lesson. The managers have power but they do



not have control over teachers. It seems that they have the power to change the framework but they still cannot control what goes on in the college. Education is becoming an important political nightmare.

### **8.5 Ambivalences and ambiguities in the response to the changes in space**

Having discussed the way that the head teachers narrated and sold the new changes to teachers, and teachers' power dynamics towards the use of space, in this section we discuss teachers' ambivalences and ambiguities in their responses to changes in space. In this section, we discuss the ambivalent and ambiguous attitudes often expressed by teaching staff during the fieldwork towards the issue of changing space. These were mainly ambivalence – teachers did not feel strongly for or against the new space/old space. Less prevalent but still present were feelings of ambiguity which were expressed in the changes to the context of their teaching practices at their workplace. In scrutinising teachers' narratives towards change it appears that they seem to have a mixture of views towards the new changes at their workplace which we explore later in this section.

#### ***8.5.1. Reflecting from past to present***

In making sense of how the teachers reflect on the changes, we start by focusing on how teachers understand the national policies set out for them. For example, a business teacher at South East College states:

*'If you look at the national perspective, the policies are put in place by politicians. We're looking at this Ofsted agenda, which is an example of current political thoughts. There is very much an expectation that in the*

*classroom, the student is going to be working harder than the teacher. If you go back 20–25 years ago, in many classes which would have been regarded as good, the teacher would have been performing. There would have been a very great focus on the teacher at the chalk board delivering content with the students' contribution being quite small. I think now, if you were to do that and be Ofsted inspected, you'd be said to be inadequate. I think Ofsted have these very high expectations of active participation from all learners, at all times, in the session and I think that's great. Most modern teachers would say that's the way it should always be. But I think the problems are, that at the same time, you've got resources being sucked out of education. I think particularly in the start of 2011, 2012, we saw big cuts in tutorial and enrichment resources, and that goes against the philosophy of giving students that independence and giving them a greater role in the classroom because students can't do it on their own. If you take out resources, colleges will have to reduce content.'*

This teacher believes the new change has a political motive, and he arrives at this conclusion this by reflecting back to what teaching was like in the past. He realises that in the past teachers were expected to deliver teaching content at the front of the classroom and that the focus has now changed to making students working harder than the teacher. He acknowledges and sees the positive aspects of the high expectations of Ofsted and says that is 'great'. He is in support of enhancing student learning and development. However, at the same time he realises there are issues with it, one being a lack of resources available in education, which leads this teacher to express a pessimistic attitude towards the initiatives implemented by the

government. This participant is questioning and uncertain as to how they (teachers) are meant to improve performance when there have been *'big cuts in tutorial and enrichment resources, and that goes against the philosophy of giving students that independence and giving them a greater role in the classroom because students can't do it on their own.'* There is no feeling of being good or bad, but some teachers see this change as a political thing whilst others do not see it as a big issue. This tells us something about work identity and it suggests that it is not held strongly by everybody at the same time. It would suggest that identity is complex, multifaceted and cannot be perceived as being fixed.

In scrutinising the semi-structured interviews and field notes it appears that teachers were attached and gave special meaning to their old building, but at the same time had a mixture of feelings towards their new one. In the field notes I notice teachers saying *'I liked our old building, it was old but it was functional and good'*. Similar views came across in the interviews. For example, a sociology teacher at South East College, states:

*'I live locally and I did like the old building architecturally. The new one... Inside, I think it's a very attractive building, accessible and has outstanding facilities. We are lucky to have that here. But I'm not sure if it's fit for purpose though for various reasons, like the work areas and the lack of decent canteen, staffroom etc. The rooms are fine for teaching, they have everything I need. I just loathe the look of the building from the outside. I think what could have been, what a wasted opportunity. I think a lot of the decisions made, going back to the divorce of management and teaching staff, and the arrogance of management. The teaching staff wasn't consulted*

*about, for example, how they wanted the rooms to look or function. There's very much a 'them and us' mentality. Take, for example, the labs in the wrong place, poorly equipped and with the wrong sort of equipment. No one really spoke to the scientists about what they really wanted in those rooms. There was no discussion between management and teachers. It never came down lower than director level.'*

From this quote we notice that this teacher approved of the old building in terms of its architectural design, but at the same time she recognises and notices the improvements in the new institution. She does not approve of its external design – *'I just loathe the look'* – but at the same time refers to it as being *'fit for purpose'*. Equally, she believes that the new organisational space divides staff across the college, and blames the management team for doing that. She feels that the new organisational design has created a *'them and us'* mentality, suggesting it has divided teachers from the management team – an interesting view that contradicts what was said by the head teachers. This links to what we discussed in the previous section – teachers recognising the power dynamics imposed by the government and the management team. Hence, she believes that the design of the new school has brought about new relationships between managers and teachers and new open working practices. This teacher recognises and acknowledges the imposed change, but it appears she feels a sense of ambivalence towards space: both options are functional and thus the physical space does not evoke much emotion. However, it is the power dynamics that she is questioning here. Therefore, the value of creating the new space is somewhat uncertain because it is not clear whether it does what it set out to do as the government functionalist and ideological rational thinking would suggest.

Equally, similar views came across during interviews at both institutions. There was a sense of ambivalence when teachers discussed the structural design of the new building. For instance, a PE teacher at North College states:

*'At this new building we have wide, open spaces which are very flexible and good for our teaching. Nowadays we don't have to keep trying to find places for staff. There is a smaller staffroom, but one of the things that tends to happen, is that we don't as a collective, use it very often. That, to some extent, is probably not socially cohesive, like it used to be in the past. There's no central medium where we all meet up. We tend to be functionalised in our individual department areas, which is probably not very good for all of us.'*

For this teacher the introduction of the open space is great; he views this change as a positive and good change for teaching. He acknowledges and realises the positive effect of the flexible working environment in the new workplace. In providing an account of the change this teacher reflects back on what it was like in the past. This participant has identified the change in teaching practices as being more individualised and functionalised. What this participant is questioning here, however, is the lack of collectiveness and togetherness in the new organisational space which appears to be important for his professionalism. This would be the same for the majority of the teachers.

A further notion of ambivalence came across when teachers discussed the use of facilities at their institution. For instance, a drama teacher at South East College states:

*'I like the materials that I use. I like the green feeling. I like that you have the kind of faculties and that facilities, on the whole, are beautiful. But I do not like the fact that everyone is segregated, because you just don't get to see other teachers from other departments. I also think it is a bit rubbish, in terms of the communication point of view. If you think about it on one hand, it is really nice. I have got a base at the end of the corridor and the photocopier, and all sorts of things, but at the same time, that means that I kind of come in here and start the day, and don't have to leave this building till the end of the day, so I don't get that interaction.'*

From this quote it could be argued that this teacher approves of the materials and facilities available at the new organisational space and believes that the facilities are 'beautiful' but at the same time he is questioning the design of the space. For this teacher the new organisational space segregates staff and this hinders the communication amongst them. It appears that this teacher is not comfortable with the way the organisational space is designed because it creates isolation and individualisation in the workplace which he sees as a negative change. In other words, what we see here is that this teacher sees the benefits of the change but at the same time recognises the consequences of the change, one being 'loneliness', and he is not keen on that feeling.

### 8.5.2. Contradictory narratives between teaching profession and teaching practice

Teachers provided contradictory narratives when discussing the impact that the new change has brought into the classroom. For example, a psychology teacher at North College states:

*'I cannot stress enough the positive change that we have in the classroom. It has made my life much easier and I am very lucky to have that now. In our old building, I remember struggling to have flexible lessons, due to the structural/physical design. I am very happy with the current teaching environment. However, I am not really happy and comfortable about the way that our [teachers'] social space is organised. I feel I'm alone and hardly see work colleagues from other departments. I feel that we don't have an appropriate space where teachers can hang out. I would like to see more quiet and relaxing spaces, like this one for us [teachers] to utilise. I am especially disappointed with the fact that we do not have that available in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century building.'*

From this quote, it appears that this participant is struggling to make sense of the change and does not just see the benefits of it but recognises the negative consequences. It appears that all these consequences are related to staff gathering. For example, we notice this participant discussing the issue of social gathering or the lack of it. What we see here is ambivalence and ambiguity which is striking because there is a clear contrast. On one hand we see this participant discussing how this change helps her provide '*flexible lessons*' but at the same time she feels the new change has made her work on her own, and she is not happy with the way that their

social space is organised. It appears that she is not sure what she would like to have. She knows that she wants to have more 'relaxing spaces' for staff but yet she is happy with the '*current teaching environment*'. Therefore, what we can conclude from this quote is that this narrative is not clear and straightforward. It is rather a narrative that is infused with contradictions; we find a lot of fragmentation, and we find ambivalence. In Lefebvre's (1991) terms, this is a classic manifestation of how we perceive space in this workspace environment.

This notion of uncertainty in response to change was evident throughout other interviews with other participants when discussing the design of the organisational space. For instance, a business teacher at South East College states:

*'We have separated departmental staffrooms here. This is great if you want to talk within a faculty, but obviously bad as a whole school development area. What we also have in there, is a whiteboard, in which we can put all the things that need to be sorted out throughout the area. But it's quite good for students because they know they can quite often find us in the faculty area. I think it's been quite good for students. Generally it's good, but also bad in some aspects, since we don't have a whole school meeting area as such.'*

For this participant this transition has good and bad aspects to it. For instance, we notice this teacher recognising the benefits of a separate departmental staffroom and approves of that. However, at the same time he realises that he does not have a '*whole school meeting area*' which appears to be important for him. It would appear that this participant is pointing out that the new organisational space has created sub-



identities, and it lacks that social interaction across the institution. What we can conclude from this quote is that this teacher recognises good changes for students and their learning environment. The ambivalence which arises here is that teachers recognise that the new organisational space meets the purpose of the programme, and they support that, but they realise that their day-to-day interaction is affected as a result of this. This is something that teachers are not keen on and do not approve of, which has repercussions for the communication between colleagues as an English teacher at North College articulates:

*‘I think in terms of what they have tried, it is obviously to create this idea of the subject being interlinked, by having these faculties in different buildings, so that the kids can see their subject as part of a wider kind of academic group. On a practical level, that makes it very difficult for teachers doing their role, because you are lacking that face to face, and so a lot of stuff is done by email. In fact, apart from the set days, that are not many times when you will come together outside your department. You have got a college meeting once a month, but you come together with people outside your department, so it can be isolated. I do not think that is necessarily a positive thing in terms of profession, especially when you need to feedback to each other. A lot of this is about communication and I am not sure the use of space in the school aids good communication. However, I think in terms of the facilities that the school has, they are, you know, pretty excellent. You know I am an English teacher, so I don’t require much specialist space, but the fact is that the dance studios are beautiful and the theatre, and you have got the*

*astro turfs. You have got all the stuff there really, so there is nothing limiting the pupils, in terms of their space.'*

From this quote we can notice that this participant understands why they are doing this and approves of it. However, from the practical level, this teacher recognises it has a negative effect on them (teachers) – she feels that she has been isolated in the new organisational space and that this is the cost they (teachers) have to bear with. The question which arises here, thus, is: who is it being designed for? It appears that it is not designed for teachers because we can clearly see that this teacher feels it lacks '*the communication*' factor. It appears it is designed to facilitate students' needs, hence teachers feel it is great for students but not for them as professionals. For this teacher, the teaching profession is about '*face to face*' interaction and that is lacking in this new organisational space, and that is something that is viewed to be an obstacle for the teaching profession.

In showing the ambivalence of the new organisational space, an English teacher at South East College articulates:

*'Once again, I think it's a blessing and a curse. Undoubtedly, for me to be mere micro-seconds away from classrooms where I teach, has to be an advantage both to me, and to the students. Although having said that, because I teach in several areas, not all of my lessons are in touching distance. I've noticed the possibility of cross-curricula debate is limited by the three storey building that we have here. By that, I mean the impact is that the English teacher doesn't necessarily meet the mathematician, and the possibility for debate or informal exchange of ideas seems to have been*

*eroded. I'm not sure about the designation of space in terms of a large number of staff and a smaller number of staff having a much larger area. But nonetheless, I think the main thing is that we do tend to be slightly isolated from each other on three floors.'*

This teacher suggests that this change is a *'blessing and a curse'* at the same time arguing that there are good and bad elements of it. This participant acknowledges and recognises the advantages of the new organisational space for him as a teacher and students alike. However, what we can see throughout this quote is the notion of segregation leading to professional isolation. Again, this is another example where teachers feel that they have to compromise their working practices for the benefit of students. That in itself leads to the notion of ambiguity because many of them (though not everybody) would say that is why they are there in the first place, and often would work long hours to fulfil the demands of teaching, and here we have a teacher complaining about students having the appropriate facilities in order to achieve set targets. This is the driving force of their work identity.

#### ***8.5.3. Contradictory narratives of the use of technology and spatial resistance***

More contradictions came across when teachers discussed the availability of technology in their new organisational space. For instance, a psychology teacher at South East College articulates:

*'The new space it's good in terms of availability of technology, but I do feel that it is not good in terms of teaching the kids. It simply doesn't work. We may be teaching them respect and independent learning, but at the same time, we don't give them the space to be able to do that. The visual arts area*

*is very lucky, in that it's got two huge resource areas. That's not enough though, because those resource areas are quite often crammed with students who want to sit and play cards. Modern teachers want people to be included in their learning and it to be an inclusive college. I think that we're not doing that because we're chucking them [the students] out as soon as lessons are finished. It seems to me that they want them out of the building as soon as possible; get them home.'*

This quote is a good illustration of ambivalence. This teacher sees the benefit of the technology, for example recognises that they have the technology available when and if needed, but is not sure whether that is always beneficial for student learning. For this teacher the use of technology by students is used as a social gathering. In other words, this teacher recognises the change but is unsure if it is beneficial for students and whether it is a right thing for their profession. An ambiguity that arises here is that if teachers have the appropriate facilities for students why do they want to get them out as soon as they can? Their ethos of teaching is about students so they are not clear about the benefits of this change.

In discussing the effect of technology at North College, a music teacher focuses on the security measurements, as he puts it:

*'We use this ID tag. Everything we have is part of this paperless system. It's used for getting into buildings, which is part of security. That is very good on the basis that you don't have to worry about keys. You just have one thing to let you in and out of the buildings. But the downside of this, is that we have to be careful with where we go and what we do throughout the day. It feels like*

*we are been watched all the time. So yeah, great, but maybe we need to be looking at who's got accessibility. I'd just be a bit careful with that one. It's used for buying food as well, so you going to make sure you've got cash on it. Good idea. I like it in that sense.'*

From this quote, it could be argued that this participant approves of some of these changes but disapproves of the other measures. For example, he is supportive of the idea that he feels secure in the workplace and that he uses his card to pay for food etc., however, at the same time he feels that he is being watched all the time. For this teacher technology is seen as a form of control and electronic surveillance. He is not keen on it and questions who has access to the information obtained through the technology.

Furthermore, in discussing the notion of ambivalence teachers reflected back on what they were allowed to do at their old building and comparing that with what they are not allowed to do in their new one. For example, a religious teacher at North College articulates:

*'As you might be aware, we are not allowed to place any posters on the walls and I understand the reasons behind it. From one side, I see what the head teacher is trying to achieve here and that is a positive thing. He does not want to create a hazardous environment for the members of the staff and students, and that is a good thing. What I am not sure about, is why this was not the case at the old building. We should have students' work placed on the wall and I do not see how that is a hazard all of a sudden. I cannot recall any incident that happened in the old building for us to change things around.'*

From this quote, by reflecting on why staff are not allowed to place posters on the wall, the participant is questioning the validity and legitimacy of the management dictate. By reflecting on the time at the old building he acknowledges that posters are important for their teaching practices and sees their classification as 'hazardous' as a threat to their professionalism. In this sense, this participant is ambivalent about the change and this has made him resistant to it to show and protect the teachers' professional autonomy. As a form of resistance to this and similar decisions, we see the personalisation of classrooms. In this context, resistance is a reformation of power in a negative form. If you believe everybody has power then your resistance is mainly your application of power. People resist because it is a form of work identity, and it is a way of protecting their sense of who they are by not complying with rules and regulations. The message personalisation delivers is: 'I am a teacher, this is who I am, this is what it is about and people personalise it to represent their profession'. From this perspective, is (de)personalisation a form of de-professionalisation? Is de-professionalisation taking away the human side of being a teacher? From Foucauldian power relation conceptualisation means that if they want they can say 'no'. If you are a free person you can simply say 'no'. 'So what is the head teacher going to do to me if I put a paper on the wall? Sack me?' That is an example of power relation.

The importance of personal space came across through the account of a history teacher at South East College:

*'This is a pleasing working environment and it has outstanding facilities. I like the fact that I can make use of technology whenever needed. There is also a room for teaching flexibly, which is important for today's teaching*

*approach. However, I do not like the fact that we do not have private space available just for teachers; not that I have anything to hide, or am scared that I will lose something, but I like to have that privacy. I would like to speak to students privately [in my office] without having a member a staff coming in and out. Basically, I would like to have an office like professors at university, but that would not happen. It is petty, because that would make our professional lives much easier and I feel that would give me (and I am sure other teachers would feel the same) that quiet and private place to work in. I guess that is all about personal possession and I have a strong view (as you can tell) about that.'*

From this quote we notice this teacher approves of the availability of the new technology and understands the benefit of it in teaching and how it fits into the new teaching approach. She compares this change to a university style institution. However, this participant is questioning and does not approve of the lack of personalised space and privacy. She would like to have a personal and private space that she can call '*mine*' and this appears to be important for her and her professional role. It appears that for this teacher to be able to stamp 'her identity' in the classroom is very important. This is another example where a teacher views change as a positive change for students and for teaching practices, but also that it comes with a burden in her professional role which she has '*strong views*' about .

The negative feelings associated with the lack of private space could have been alleviated if the available spaces were designed and utilised productively and resourcefully, as a history teacher at South East College points out:

*'I feel that the resource areas have a positive impact upon us as professionals. It's certainly a thing that parents ask about at open days and they really like the fact that there's an open access space where students can come in and work with supervision. Also, from one resource area, you can see the other resource area. There's a real sense of community and we're all working together for a common purpose. At the same time, however, I am not sure about the design of the atrium. I suppose in some sense, the atrium is a great open space, but it could be used in a much more productive way. It's like an airport space, and I feel that we could have done something with the atrium to make it more effective as a space. Even something simple like putting chairs down, would give additional space where people could chill out. At the moment it's just open and people just walk through. I am not big fan of it.'*

From this quote we notice that this teacher is articulating that this is a good change for him but at the same time he is providing contradictory accounts stating that he is not keen on the design of atrium because he feels that it should be utilised better. This is an unusual conception because he thinks that this space creates a sense of 'community' and this is good for teachers and students alike. However, he claims that the downside of this design is that this is an unproductive space and he is not keen on it. The airport-like space as described by this teacher invokes images of chaos and a connection area that essentially belongs to no one. This is found to be unsuitable for teaching and working purposes. In that sense this participant is seeing a bigger picture of the educational institution and it is idealising what the design should look like.



Teachers at both institutions felt lost, and there is a sense of ambiguity about the way new working practices have been imposed on them by the management team, and they question whether it responds to their professional needs. For example, a geography teacher at South East College states:

*'I get annoyed about the new teaching approaches because I feel there is extra work and being on your own... I cannot see where it is going but the head teacher is really pushing it. I am not too sure where we are going with this'.*

And in a similar vein a music teacher at North College feels 'lost':

*'I feel lost here, I feel do not know how these changes reflect our professional role and I am not clear on how they improve our teaching practices... what I see at this school is that teachers are lost at sea.'*

Not only do these two teachers express negative attitudes towards the 'new modern teaching approach', but an ambiguity and lack of understanding of the contribution of new teaching practices to learning and teaching are also evident. This questioning and level of frustration with the new teaching approach is argued to have something to do with the way new changes are communicated. What we notice here is that both teachers recognise the change in their profession but are struggling to make sense of what will change and how these changes will affect their future professionalism. In other words, they are not sure what they are going to be faced with and as one teacher felt, they are 'lost at sea'.

To conclude, from Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space, here we have seen a tension and contradictions of space. To make sense of these tensions in terms of occupational identity, Ibarra's perspective is useful. It appears the impact of space on individualisation, professionalisation and collectivity is situational and sometimes contradictory, and if you ask each individual member of staff they will often position themselves in contradictory discourses. From Ibarra's perspective, we know that identity is temporary, situational and provisional, and this is where ambiguity and ambivalence exist. What we have noticed here is that for some teachers there are positive and negative changes and these are in tension. Hence, there is an ambiguity with relation to whether changes have had a positive or negative effect on teachers and students alike. They expressed the level of their future professional uncertainty development which appeared to be important for them. In some instances, it shows that it fits the managerial perception, but in reality we need to question this more and explore what other participants have to say about it. As such this transition was not as smooth as was suggested by the management and there are issues of power, complexity, and human behaviour which give rise to other issues.

Some teachers see it as a major attack and some see it as a minor change. Some see it as a major implication for their teaching practices and their existence as professional teachers and others see it as 'somebody has a bigger room than I have'. Some see it as an attack on their professionalism and some see it as a change to develop the school and get better working conditions. In other words, what we notice here is that the changes are not felt the same by everybody and people highlight in their position of themselves different aspects of it depending on what they value and their life experiences. It is interesting, therefore, that changes in space do not bring out one

constant theme, and to ask why this is – is space more important for some than others in their professional identity? Space it is important but there is other stuff that influences teachers' professional identity such as age, gender and life experience that have not been explored in this study.

## **8.6 Chapter summary**

To conclude: in this chapter, through the utilisation of Lefebvre's perspective on space and Ibarra's thinking on formation of occupational identity, we have covered a range of important issues around the components that are significant in formation, protection and re-formation of the teaching profession. We have covered issues around power dynamics, covering the way that the managers bought the national narratives and sold them to teachers, and the way that teachers perceived such changes and the power dynamics that ensued. In this chapter teacher's ambivalence and ambiguity towards the change has also been discussed.

In the first part of this chapter, through Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space, we discussed the way that teachers reclaimed their identity and the special meanings that they gave to space through their daily practices. Here we discussed the importance of space in delivering a message with regards to social gathering, trust, and sense of belonging in the teaching profession. Here we also explored the way that teachers resisted the new organisational change, either through passive or active resistance, and the way that they upheld their territorial jurisdictions and professional identity.

In the second part of this chapter we explored how the managers 'bought' the national narrative and 'sold' the changes to the teachers whereby we explored the way that managers (in this instance head teachers) interpreted the national narrative

and the way that they sold it to teachers. The narratives in this section suggested that head teachers used positive and dominant discourses in order to sell the new planned changes in their belief that such changes will have a positive effect on the teaching profession. In this section, the hidden and underlying power structure within these narratives is highlighted.

In the third section of this chapter we turned attention to Ibarra's formation of identity and explored the experiences of teachers of the spatial changes and the power dynamics that ensued, where we discuss how such changes have an impact on their professional identity, and the effect on their daily practices. To make sense of such changes Lefebvre's work is fruitful because through his thinking we make sense of spatial changes in terms of tensions and contradictions. Thus, explored in this section is teachers' feeling of being disconnected from the managers as the questioning of their teaching practices by non-teachers arose. Equally, the tension and contradiction created between the managers' vision and the teachers' response towards the new organisational space showed that managers have power over teachers but they do not have control over them.

In the final part, we focused our attention on teachers' ambivalent and ambiguous attitudes towards the issue of changing space, often expressed by teaching staff during the fieldwork. This section discussed teachers' ambivalence and, less prevalent but also present, their ambiguity in their responses towards the new change. Narratives in this section suggest that teachers provide contradictory discourses towards change; for some teachers there are positive and negative changes and these are in tension. Last but not least, the effect of such changes is felt

differently by different individuals and their response to the changes depends on what they value and their life experiences.

To sum up this chapter, Lefebvre's work on multiple interrelated and contradictory spaces helped us to reveal the resistance where the management buys the imagined space from the government and imposes it on the workplace, and against this is the perceived space of the profession and the lived space. More specifically, the teachers resist the imagined space because it clashes with their perceived space. They have the perceived space that comes with their profession and to do this they keep going back to the old perception and this is how they are attached to the perceived space at the old institutions. Because Lefebvre thinks in terms of tensions and contradictions, his work does not help us to explore formation of identity, and so Ibarra's work proved to be useful for exploring the formation, reformation and change of identity through notions of fluidity, ambivalence and ambiguity.

## **Chapter 9: Discussions and conclusions**

### **9.1 Introduction**

The existing literature in organisation studies shows that space is given insufficient attention. A number of researchers, including Munro and Jordan (2013) claim that space is an important factor in shaping an individual's sense of self at the workplace but there is scant research that explores how space contributes to and challenges this sense of self and collective community which are important in the formation and upholding of occupational identity. The empirical findings of this study reinforce the claim that space has important significance in educational settings. In this study we have shown that people do not take buildings and space just merely as physical but something to be lived in. As such, it has a significant effect in shaping and sense giving to professional practice and to profession. For instance, we have seen how space shapes teachers' daily activities and breaks down physical boundaries between them. This affords additional importance to the function of building and structural design developments as supporting prospects for new spaces, places and performances. As argued by Kreiner (2002), the connection between building design and ownership is frequently ignored in the narratives of managers and architects. To elaborate, people reflect on and are protective towards their given space and they adapt it in such a way that it represents their personality and their professionalism. As a result, spatial change destabilises or creates identity crisis revealing new power relations in the workplace. From this interpretivist study all objects are not fixed and they are open to re-specification depending on content. Thus, the purpose of this thesis has been to scrutinise how, if at all, the physical change of organisational

space, forms and re-forms teachers' occupational identity. In doing so this study explores the question: how is occupational identity mediated by space?

In addressing this question, this thesis draws upon Lefebvre's (1991) conceptualisation of space to understand the relation between identity and space, and utilises Ibarra's (1999) work to explain how space is involved in the constitution of occupational identity. Focusing on Lefebvre's (1991) work allowed me to scrutinise the organisational lived spaces and contrast them with the conceived and perceived spaces which were constructed by the management team and teachers respectively. As discussed in the literature review, Lefebvre (1991) dismissed the idea that space is transparent and neutral, showing that for him, spaces are used for a reason and with a purpose in mind. Through Lefebvre's (1991) categorisation of space as conceived, perceived and lived space we acknowledge that space is politicised and contested in organisations (Learmonth and Harding 2006). Equally, Ibarra's (1999) work helps us make sense of and explore how space forms and transforms occupational identity. As discussed in the literature review, the fundamental belief here is that professional identity is constructed over time, with diverse experiences and significant responses that enable individuals to understand their vital and continuing preferences, abilities and morals. Hence, professional identity is more flexible and variable; individuals portray personalities as potential personalities they would like others to assign to them.

Through Lefebvre's understanding of space and Ibarra's work on formation of identity this thesis, using the teaching profession as the focus of interest, contributes to the current literature on space and occupational identity to advance knowledge of how narratives form self-identity. It provides rich empirical data and explores this by

focusing on self-narratives of how teachers perform. In this way, this study explores how occupational identity is translated into day-to-day practices. It presents the voice of the teaching profession and how teachers identify themselves in their current teaching environment. This thesis contributes to the debate on the interpretive aspect of space and identity. An interpretive stance also helps us to reveal that actually there was no uniform theme from teachers' responses to the changing spatial arrangements.

With this in mind, this chapter starts with a summary of the main findings of this study revisiting the questions posed at the beginning of the thesis in chapter 2. Next, in section 9.3, new insights that have emerged from the study will be discussed in relation to the literature. This is followed by section 9.4 explaining how this finding extends the debate in the existing literature. I conclude the chapter with a reflection on the practical implications of this study as well as issues in terms of limitations and future research.

## **9.2. Summary of findings**

As discussed in the literature chapter, for the purposes of the study at hand identity is understood as a complex and multifaceted concept and it is not the focus within this study to propose a definite standpoint on 'what is identity?' Emphasis is given to how space influences and modifies our occupational identity in relation to places where we work in response to the dynamics of transformational spatial change. In this study, it is recognised that the researcher may have been sympathetic to the teachers and the existing educational management situation in schools. However, emphasis in this study has been placed on different narratives that employees provide



when discussing the changes in their organisational space, in order to avoid being influenced by their stories and feelings.

This study takes a broader view on space; space is not just the walls and physical domain, a similar argument highlighted by Kornberger and Clegg (2004) and Munro and Jordan (2013). Indeed, space has special meaning to teachers that resides in their imaginative perception of idealised space. Accordingly, this thesis shows that organisational space should be appraised beyond its physical appearance. With this in mind the main focus has been on the way that power and social relations are shaped as a result of the new organisational space(s); the way that spatial constructions are shaped in connection with these power and social relations; and the way that hypothetical developments have evolved to support the links concerning social relations and spatial constructions. By comparing the conceived, perceived and lived spaces through Lefebvre's lens, I have been able to show and examine how the new organisational space is lived in and experienced at both institutions.

Having discussed the key findings of the thesis, below I expand on the discussion of how this study explains the way that space interplays with the human psyche to construct and modify occupational identity. The thesis explores how space is involved in the formation of occupational identity from the perspective provided by the space–action debate and provides us with some useful insights into studying a new, nuanced way of destabilisation and negotiation of occupational identity in light of social and power relations suggested by spatial changes. Below I show a summary **Table 1** showing how research questions picked up in the literature are answered in this study through Lefebvre's work, and show the key findings of this study.

<b>How is space involved in occupational identity?</b>	
<b>Research questions that arose from the literature review</b>	<b>What are the key findings in this study that relate to the research questions?</b>
How does space contribute to and challenge established occupational identities? If we perceive identity as being fluid, situational and provisional how do destabilised organisational spaces impact on occupational identities?	Space gives a sense of continuity to employees  Space helps uphold in-groups identity.
What are the tensions, interactions and oppositions between perceived, conceived and lived spaces? And what happens when new spatial arrangements have been conceived (and created) without taking into account perceived and lived spaces?	Space provides employees with a sense of expectations and idealised performance.
If the planned organisational space is organised in a way that represents new power relations in organisations, how can we then make sense of such new relations if we do not study spatial formation and the purpose behind it? It could be the case that such changes are aimed at providing just positive effects but we might expect surprising things to happen and as such to what extent can the surprising things be labelled encouraging?	Space assists in the development of a sense of belonging.
If organisations are made from both social interactions and physical appearance, is there a link between these two in the construction of new power relations in organisations? In what way, if at all, are power relations conveyed by new architectural design?	Space sustains hierarchy by establishing a daily routine that excludes and isolates groups of workers.  Change in space presents prospects for renegotiating both personal and public opinions of self.

**Table 1 questions arising from the literature review and new findings**

### ***9.2.1 How does conceived space govern daily activities and collaborations?***

As discussed in section 2.3.3 space is perceived as engaging with daily activities and interactions in institutions (Yanow, 2010) and as such can be viewed as the personification of societal associations (Yanow, 2010; Dale and Burrell, 2011). The findings in this research suggest that occupational identity is constructed and modified through idealised expectations that professionals have to behave and perform in a certain way in particular spaces. The new physical layout conveyed a message that the workplace has shifted away from being an educational institution to a commercial one. For some teachers it felt that they were working in a banking industry and that they had to meet certain targets set by the management team. It seemed to me that teachers had to renegotiate the way that they interacted with their colleagues and students around the building. They sensed that there were different expectations set out by the management team: being efficient, proactive and readily available for student enquiry in or out of class, and being in the performing role at all times.

In the workplace teachers have a group of activities and practices, as well as identities, and these change on a daily basis. For instance, a teacher has a different role and behaves differently when it comes to being in the classroom as opposed to being in a group meeting. Thus, this study highlights that occupational identity must equally exist in space and this is where space is especially important in the formation and modification of occupational identity (Gibbens 1991; Elsbach 2003; 2004). It appeared to me that there was a sense of disorientation because the new organisational space made teachers have to adjust to the new surrounding environment. The findings from this study enable us to uncover a variety of core

parameters by which people who are subject to institutional templates explain architectural style changes in their approaches to teaching, and make sense of their resources, outlines and design fashions.

Accordingly, it seems the value of space is only recognised once it is taken away. More long-standing members of the teaching profession will invariably feel this denial of space more than more recent recruits to the profession, thanks to the existence of experience, reflection, and time. It seems however, although management are still privy to their space and privacy, teachers are not, and little or no indication of such a spatial change was communicated. Policy does however allude to this. To illustrate, the world to which teaching as a profession is moving is:

*‘Where out-of-hours teaching and learning will become a more important part of everyday school life’.*

Reading between the lines, ‘*out-of-hours teaching and learning*’ may refer to those times teachers once used to steal away to the staffroom. Indeed, one can see that the modern teaching approach espouses a more open facility of resources, including the teachers themselves. Contrary to this conceived space, teachers’ narratives suggest that teachers valued hidden spaces (e.g. the removal of their main staffroom meant that teachers questioned their profession). In response to spatial changes moving to modern, open-plan spaces their expectation is that they have to be interacting with their students at all times, with no time for rest or more social interaction. The only time where teachers are able to legitimately hide away from students is when they smoke. Even when teachers are in their departmental staffroom, students still have access to teachers; hence, they are expected to be at their performing stage at all

times, even during their lunch break. These are expectations that the management have set up for them, and in response to such change in terms of accessibility, spatial change serves to alter the teachers' professional role and duties.

To conclude, in response to the physical change, non-physical changes accumulated within the teachers' psyche as they showed frustration, anxiety, resistance, and annoyance regarding the lack of hidden space at their disposal, and the lack of space in general for teachers of differing departments to collaborate within their new physical working environment. This finding relates to those by Kersten and Gilardi (2003) and Hatch (2006) whereby the design of the physical structure of a building of an organisation served to manipulate workers' reactions. For instance, as drawn from this study teachers' frustration at the lack of space in their new organisational space was fuelled by the fact that space was seen as an important element in performing their role as a professional. They drew on their reflections and made reference to their lived experience. This reinforces Tuan's (1977, p 54) claim that *'space lies open.... [and] has no fixed pattern of established human meaning' and that place is 'a calm centre of established values...[and] security'*. As argued by Baldry (1999) the physical work environment shapes workers' work experience. This is because the physical building shapes workers' proximity to their work colleagues, visual privacy, and so on.

### ***9.2.2 How do teachers react to tensions and oppositions between perceived, conceived and lived spaces?***

In this study it appeared that teachers had a sense of expectation and idealised space for their professional role and their daily work activities. This caused tension

between perceived and lived space. For instance, teachers expressed the importance of spatial control at their workplace because they claimed it provides the sense of authority, collective community and autonomy within their profession. This study shows that teachers expected to have their own space at the new building where they taught because they had had that space in the past in their old building. When space was taken away from teachers it provided them with a sense of new expectations and idealised performances to which they had to adapt in their new organisational space. The lack of a congenial work space ignores the more socially-oriented rhythms of being a teacher, and as such calls for a reappraisal of one's place in the organisation and sense of belonging; hence, there is scope here for identity crisis.

The new organisational space provided failed to meet teachers' expectations of the perceived space. The tension and opposition between conceived, perceived and lived spaces triggered the establishment of territorial boundaries between work colleagues of different departments. The teachers replaced the now challenged school identity with departmental identity to counter management's isolation attempts. This is one form of jurisdictional control of professionalism as argued by Abbott (1988; 1998). The main idea that he puts across is that study of the tasks or work activities of occupations is the key to understanding transformations in professionalisation. He perceives jurisdictional differences/struggles for control over 'arenas of work' as fundamental actions between professions. He views specialism as an occurrence that can support or destabilise jurisdiction boundaries. This study shows that such jurisdictional control is shown through the utilisation of claimed space and professionals create physical boundaries to communicate their professionalism to outsiders.

Even where teachers shared classrooms with other colleagues from their department, teachers were protective of their space and there was a perception that teachers from other departments would not use that space without asking teachers from the department in question. Equally, this study shows that professionals, in this instance teachers, expect to have their own space and in doing so they claim their space and form visible territorial jurisdictions. This communicates to outsiders as ‘this is my workspace’ and as resistance to working in a different way and giving up their space. Thus, this finding suggests that the jurisdictional control of occupational identity is shown by the spatial territorial jurisdictions that teachers make visible to other members in the organisation.

In the face of a changing spatial domain, the stamping of one’s identity on a space that is meant to be ‘shared’ and ‘open’ may be interpreted as an act of territorialism. Similarly, being told that placing work up on the walls is against school policy seemingly serves to chip away at teachers’ one-time command and autonomy. From the other side of the fence, it signifies an identity that is feeling potentially estranged, if not ‘lost in space’, particularly as the right to decide how you want to deliver teaching and impart knowledge becomes influenced by forces external to the teacher. If forces are beyond a teacher’s control this is expected to bear an influence upon formations of identity. Therefore, it suggests that there are day-to-day struggles and tensions in the way that teachers experience their teaching and work spaces and the control forces at work that take place within the educational context (Tyler and Cohen 2010).

The present study shows that individuals display passive and active resistance towards change imposed on them by the management team. The personalised space

in this research acted as a way of idealising space and as a way to control teachers' occupational identity. This is because if you have conceived space it is not just about what you need to do, but also where and when you need to do something. For instance, the idealised expectation was shown in the way that the personalised space was presented in the classroom and this was because it shaped the teachers' workplace. The importance of this personalised space was shown when the new organisational space was introduced because, as explained previously, teachers were not allowed to personalise their classroom. When this change happened teachers potentially faced an identity crisis, and this caused tension between the management team and teachers. Despite these imposed rules, teachers resisted the change and personalised their classrooms. They personalise space and imprint parts of their personality according to their professional needs and they become very protective and resistant of 'their space'. A core reason for this is that the outer spatial domain provides a very real and tangible reflection of 'who they are' and 'what they do' in order to affirm a sense of continuity. Physical and tangible reflections of what teachers teach seemingly assists in mentally preparing students for the learning ahead, as teaching is not just about books and PowerPoint. It is also about being reflective, and prompts in the outer physical domain facilitate acts of reflection deemed desirable for learning.

This illustrates the importance of personalised space to their profession. In order to cope, they had to adapt to the change. This finding again (as discussed above) reflects Tuan's (1977) study which argues that the workforce is persons who appreciate being with their colleagues and require the emotional and physical autonomy connected with the organisational space. In this research it appeared that



the personalisation of the workspace increased workers' capability to sustain a noticeable in-group identity and personality. It appeared that personalisation of space was understood as a 'controlling' of space – i.e. 'this is my own space' – that showed and protected territories. Across both institutions personalised space gave a sense of control to teachers. For instance, when teachers were moved to the new space they realised that their previous personalised space had been removed from them. They realised that they needed to have their own personalised space to form a new means of control. For instance, an RE teacher personalised his classroom with religious symbols because he felt that it represented the subject that he taught. This personalised space was also utilised as a way of presenting physical boundaries to outsiders. This was because through the personalised space teachers were able to inform outsiders that this is 'my working environment and it belongs to me'. Hence they personalised their work space in the way they wanted, and through this they showed their 'professionalism' and autonomy to the management team and outsiders.

It appeared that in this study the personalisation of space represented the way that workers maintained self-coherence and self-image in the face of experienced tensions and oppositions resulting from destabilised space. In the new organisational space, there is no room for imprinting one's identity in an individualised way, even though teachers seek to award special meaning to their teaching environment as well as their work desk in their departmental staffroom. As a conflict of interest seemingly abounds in terms of identifying with a particular spatial domain to bolster one's role as a professional, this study elucidates that the debate in terms of space,

reflections, and narratives of space in the formation and modification of teachers' occupational identity is very real indeed.

### ***9.2.3 How does spatial change intertwine with established occupational identities?***

If we refer back to the literature review Elsbach (2003; 2004) argues that the layout of an office and its artefacts represent individual identities. This study also shows that organisational space is a tool that carries the characteristics of the desired or 'ideal' of the occupational identity, which is imposed by the management team. It forms the daily activities of the group and as a model it enforces a particular image of the given occupational identity. In this study it appeared that teachers identified themselves with their workplace. For example, as discussed in the previous section, they gave a significant meaning to their departmental staffroom. The main claim here is that space is pre-emptive because its presence is direct and it constructs work and communal spaces. In other words, the physical surrounding environment signifies the sense of self, of 'who I am' and 'what my professional role at this institution is', and thus provides a sense of recognisability over time and location. A sense of occupational identity is constructed and modified by narrating various experiences of one's time in the organisational space where people can come to terms with the new ways of undertaking their professional duties on a daily basis.

The new organisational design created a desire to seek out a sense of continuity for teachers through the construction of their new working environment and daily practices, even if this meant breaking the rules. What is more, the removal of the main staffroom, or its inconvenient positioning compared with the physical positioning of the departmental staffroom, has shown how space can change

socially-constructed realities pertaining to one's sense of belonging, sense of self-worth, and subsequently, identity.

The spatial change has prompted teachers to make sense of shifts and reflect back on questions such as, 'Who am I in this organisation? What is my professional role, and why am I changing the way I interact with my colleagues in my profession?' Through this physical transformation they became concerned and anxious about their occupational identity. This change has ultimately created tension between the imagined professional role and the performed one. This isolation contributed to the subordination and jurisdictional controls of individuals and groups. This is because they had to deal with a new way of working on a daily basis and were shifted away from colleagues of other departments.

In social sciences, identities have long been viewed as formed and negotiated through social interactions (Goffman 1959; Mead 1934). The work by Ibarra (1999) reminds us that individuals create identity claims by assigning images that signify the way that they perceive themselves, or even wish to be perceived by others. Individuals keep or adjust their personal self-perception by noticing their personal actions and the responses of others who acknowledge, refuse, or renegotiate these public visualisations (Swan 1987). In this study I did not seek to provide a resolution to these discussions. Instead I seek to broaden the discussion by suggesting that a change in a physical environment at the workplace produces prospects for renegotiating both personal and public opinions of the self.

Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003, p 1165) claim that the more problematic and challenging identity work is provoked when our self-image is vulnerable or publicly

doubted or damaged by 'self-doubt and self-openness'. This study suggests that a change of organisational space provoked teachers' professional reactions and entailed a loss of self. It created tension between teachers and outsiders' opinions. In discussing how the physical space altered the way that the public viewed them, the teachers discussed how they disliked the way they interacted in the workplace, and how public opinion was assumed to be one of teachers inhabiting a luxury space with not much work to do. It appeared that this physical change created a reasoned expectation of renegotiating both individual and public opinions of the self.

This study concludes that at both institutions the personalisation of workstations helped teachers who had just joined the institution(s) to familiarise themselves with their new work setting, and enhanced their emotional affection for their workplace. In this study I argue that when discussing the reflection, formation and modification of occupational identity people refer to idealised performance, and this is because they do not think too much about space. From the findings of this research it appears that space is intertwined with occupational identity and, as previously argued, people take space for granted even though it is always there.

#### ***9.2.4 What are the new power relations constructed, mediated and conveyed by space?***

As we have seen in the previous section, in this research it appeared that the new organisational space created a sense of dislocation and tension between the conceived space and the lived one, and this created a sense of isolation amongst the staff. The individual accounts of dislocation at both institutions could be regarded as a function of the justification and narrative of the new profession. This underlines the

exclusive forms of space power, and that this functions as a mechanism that carries on shaping daily life in this profession. It appeared that the predicable space generated by the buildings conflicted with the ideal space imagined by the teachers. The spatial change reinstated managerial prerogative by making teachers feel isolated in their department by removing opportunities for interaction with colleagues from other departments. This caused identity crisis and identity modification. Teachers recognised and understood the enforced isolation as being due to the positioning and design of the workplace.

For instance, it appeared that the removal of the main staffroom in the new organisational space caused tension between teachers and the management team. This made them question the management's competencies as they labelled management as individuals with a managerial role who have not taught in the past, know little of how to teach and are out of touch, if not unqualified. Teachers felt that they were becoming unnoticed by the organisation as respected members of staff, and that their professional role was diminishing. They conveyed their general uncertainty about their future status within their profession. It appeared that teachers had to somehow renegotiate their sense of self and their belonging to the wider organisational domain at the interface spanning their perceptions of the new modern teaching approach and the delivery of teaching in practice. Teachers feel they are professionals and the freedom to manipulate their spatial domain is a significant feature of teaching, both for engaging in reflection professionally for themselves in forming their occupational identity, and also for the students to feel pride in their work by having it displayed, and therefore noticed.

It appeared that there are day-to-day struggles and tensions in the way that teachers performed their space and the power dynamics that occur in the organisation. This debate is familiar in organisational space studies: for example, Knights (1990, p 329) states that 'material and symbolic resource' might be utilised as an object of power (Dale and Burrell 2008). What has emerged from this study is that teachers recognise and understand the isolation from their colleagues at workplace as being due to the positioning and design of the workplace. In line with Shortt's (2014) findings, what became apparent from this study is the significance of hidden spaces with respect to dominant spaces within this power dynamic. For example, teachers valued their privacy and they recognised and understood the isolation felt in relation to their colleagues as being due to the positioning and design of the workplace. It appeared that the design of the organisational space sustained the power of the hierarchy and division amongst the staff. The distribution of the physical space represented the importance of the power of the hierarchy. It appeared that teachers realised how, through the division of space, their professional role was being both controlled and modified.

The design of the new organisational space also caused and communicated a loss of trust, and this change created tension and resistance between the management team and teachers. Teachers were uncomfortable with the glass in their classroom doors, and they did not appreciate being told they were not allowed to eat hot food in their departmental staffroom because this signalled a lack of trust. Similarly, the introduction of technology also created expectations for teachers which were contradictory to what was narrated by the management team. For example, although the use of CCTV and swipe cards is perceived by teachers as being used to enhance

safety and security in the schools, some teachers feel uncomfortable with the system as they feel they are being monitored by the management team and that they are not trusted. A significant lack of freedom of movement transpires and teachers feel as if they are being watched as a result of the heightened visibility and control.

This finding suggests that trust is important for teachers' professional role. Spatial decisions help employees to make sense of the value of their profession and recognise when their professional self-sufficiency is being diminished. Another example would be the perception of the use of technology and its perceived implications for the future of the occupation. Teaching is seemingly no longer seen as a craft that only a few can do. Teaching, as dictated by national policy, is subject to what the behaviourist camp of organisational learning advocate: that anyone can be changed by changes in the stimulus environment (Tyler and Cohen 2010). According to government policy, teachers are facilitators and anyone can be a facilitator thanks to the availability of technology. It seems that way, as most facilitation can be subject to automation.

Yet, it appears teachers only understood that there would be a greater incorporation of technology. Under this guise, and the guise of apparently bringing down the perceived and physical walls dividing management and the teaching staff, teachers seemingly have drawn the short straw. Whether or not motives are politically driven to keep a one-time union-strong profession in hand, it seems space has been used as a form of control, and that the scope for collaboration outside of functional departments is severely inhibited via spatial distance and temporal scarcity and timetabling. This is somewhat suggestive of a 'divide and rule' ethos as mentioned earlier, whereby space is used to isolate teachers as opposed to empowering them.

Contrary to national level policy, the barriers and tensions between teachers and management do not seem to be addressed or alleviated. This is one of the main stories to emerge from the data. In fact, with disproportionate allocations of space awarded to management as compared to teachers, the latter feel short changed and crammed into tiny spaces. In light of such disparities a rather less than congenial working atmosphere manifests itself, which can bring stress and strain to bear upon the staff affected. Still there are always two sides to every story, and for some, expectations were confirmed. For others however, expectations were disconfirmed. As such, this finding suggests that employees reflect back on their 'idealised' space as a way to reflect back on what is actually happening in reality.

The use of space by management as a symbol of status and power not only caused tension between teachers and the management team but further triggered teachers' actions and reaction to communicate their personal and in-group individuality to counter management's attempt to alter the power dynamics. As noted in section 9.2.2 space helped teachers uphold their group identity through awareness of their belonging in space. Revisiting this finding through Soja's (1989) and Munro and Jordan's (2013) work who argued that we should not treat places merely as innocent and depoliticised grounds in which individuals live and act, in this study it appeared that space is politicised and that teachers created their personalised space in classrooms to protect and reinforce their occupational identity. Through the personalisation of space, teachers communicated their personal and in-group individuality, their position at their institution and group relationships (Konar and Sundstrom 1986; Wells 2000; Wells *et al.*, 2007). This finding reinforces the fact that everything happens in a space and as such space plays an important role in



forming and modifying teachers' occupational identity. This is because through the personalisation of space teachers formed their spatial jurisdictional territories, and this was important in their reflection, formation and modification of their professional role. In this study, teachers personalised their classroom to create an awareness of their workspace, and also to help their practised control of their environments, and to regulate their social interactions with their work colleagues and the management team (Brown 1987; Munro and Jordan 2013).

Under the new policies, the management team made it clear that teachers were not allowed to place posters on the wall in their classroom, but teachers resisted this policy and went ahead and placed posters on the wall. What is more, this study also reveals that the personalised space signalled an in-group identity. Thus, even though teachers personalised their classroom, it also represented their in-group identity, and outsiders would know that the space belongs to that group. For instance, when you entered the psychology department as an outsider you automatically knew that this represented that department. Hence, what this shows is that space is used to communicate the in-group identity and that individuals use space as a tool to express themselves.

This finding resonates with Evett's (2006, p 552) sociological work where she argues that the determination of standards and characteristics mirrors more '*occupational discourses of professionalism*', which involves autonomy and self-control. She argues that occupational professionalism is based on the notion that within a particular professional group there is a mutual authority which incorporates trust between the manager and employee as well as employee and customers. In this study it appears that the changes in the organisational space have resulted in loss of

autonomy and self-control because the layout of the building separated and isolated teachers within their department. Teachers felt that they were losing their professional autonomy because they had to follow strict rules on how to teach, where to teach and where to be during their free time. Their interactions, of course, happen in space, and space established daily routines which excluded and isolated teachers.

There was a sense that teachers related to the dominant spaces of their workplace with a social awareness grounded in both pride and awkwardness. It appeared that teachers assigned their professional values to spaces which had the potential to make them self-conscious if they did not fulfil the expectations encompassing their professional self. For instance, teachers made connections by assigning descriptions that indicated the way they regarded themselves or wished to be noticed by others. The new organisational space signified an aspect of teachers' desire to relate to professionally, and be part of, their institutional representation.

This study posits that organisational space can be used as a group-making tool to influence in-group identity, tribal gathering, territorialism, and unspoken norms and social activity (Kornberger, *et al.*, 2006; Munro and Jordan, 2013; Fahy *et al.*, 2013). For instance, space can either encourage or inhibit social interaction and as such can form perceived or real boundaries between people who have, in the past, been united as a group spanning different disciplines and departments. When reflecting on the change from buildings in the past to how the school buildings have been designed for today, collaboration of teachers across differing departments is simply not afforded. Instead a seemingly 'divide and rule' tactic is adopted towards the design of a new spatial domain to keep the strength of teachers at bay. Is this a political

motive? Or is it simply an accident? An oversight? What is for sure is that teachers seemingly identify with their department more so than with the school as a whole.

### **9.3 Key contributions to knowledge**

My findings allow us to use Lefebvre's framework to show and explain how spatial issues affect occupational identity and create identity crisis and uncertainties with a variety of results. As such, this study has revealed some new interactions between identity and space showing the power dynamics and ambiguities at play. To make sense of these findings, this study synthesises space literature with the identity literature through Lefebvre's (1991) work and Ibarra's (1999) conceptualisation of identity, which is one of the central contributions of this thesis. Hence, what this research does, it brings together two streams of literature in understanding formation of identity through the construct of space.

In this research I argue that reflection, formation and modification of occupational identity is related to space. This is because people think of identity in terms of things to do and that includes what to say, what not to say and how to act. Sometimes it is about relationship and collaboration with your colleagues. However, where and when this entire situation happens is usually taken for granted and remains underdeveloped. Are there idealised expectations by which we are influenced? Therefore, the question which I address in this study is whether this is part of occupational identity or something that depends on individual discussion. This study has identified and shows different ways in which space is involved in the formation of identity, which are discussed in section 9.2, and shows that professionals are pushed into a continuing negotiation over the creation and utilisation of their day-to-

day space. By helping us understand how identity is mediated by space, this study also reveals how space is used as a tool by managers to signal a change in the profession.

Influenced by Lefebvre's (1991) understanding of space this thesis adds to the debate through other scholars who adapt his thinking. His focus was on the observation of the physical space and the way that we interpret it. In recapping what we stated in the literature review, Lefebvre (1991) argues that there is no such thing as a '*neutral space*' and we only make sense of space through our daily activities whereby we identify spatial arrangement within the institution, and within that visible spatial arrangement we identify an order. His argument was that space is part of a social construction and it entails symbolic terrains and spaces of power. Through his lens, this study provides analyses and distinguishes two spaces of the organisational change: firstly, teachers delivering their lessons in their institution within particular spaces and places, and secondly, the management team who have their own separate spaces and are responsible for making strategic decision about the school(s). In this study we have shown how space is understood by the management team/head teachers and how lived space is understood by the inhabitants (teachers in this instance).

Equally, from Ibarra's conceptualising of identity this study adds to her discussion of formation of identity. As discussed previously, Ibarra's (1999) work concentrates on how identity changes and develops. She focuses on the identity and formation of change and this is the theory of identity formation and scrutinises the socialisation of identity. I extend Ibarra's concept of formation of occupational identity by

introducing the space aspect into it. In this research I argue that formation, reflection and modification of occupational identity has to do with space.

In this way, through Lefebvre's (1991) understanding of space and Ibarra's (1991) concept of identity this study expands and addresses the question of where occupational identity is spatially situated. In the literature chapter we discussed Ibarra's concept of identity as being in flux and temporarily situated. In this study occupational identity is seen as dynamic and emergent, formed by different social and spatial elements. These include the way the professionals (here, teachers) are regarded by others, their daily life at the workplace which is shaped by the use of space, their personal interactions and experiences which are embedded through the use and socialisation of space at the workplace, and the way that the institutions construct their daily practices and the development of individual identities at work. In this vein the interaction, socialisation and symbolism of space brings individuals together or keeps them apart, and this has an effect on the way that they perceive their occupational identity.

Through Lefebvre (1991) and Ibarra's (1999) works, this study contributes to the space-action debate and the existing literature in organisational studies in three different ways. First, through Lefebvre's lens, it discusses how identity is mediated through space, discusses the politicisation of space and shows that space can be used to emphasise or interrupt power relations in the workplace. Secondly, through application of Lefebvre's work this study explains tensions created through spatial change and the implications that these have for the formation of occupational identity. Thirdly, this study takes Lefebvre's concern with tensions one step further by unpacking the complications posed by these for the formation, reflection and

modification of occupational identity. To make sense of this, Ibarra's work has been introduced to argue that space is instrumental in reflecting and formulating new, sometimes provisional, sometimes conflicting, occupational identities and that this leads to ambivalence and ambiguity in the profession. This study shows that this interpretation depends on the development of the understanding of sensemaking by employees.

### ***9.3.1. Bringing space into the discussion of identity through Lefebvre's thinking***

As the first contribution, this study utilises Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space to bring space back into discussion of occupational identity. This study reveals the importance of the relationship between the physical environment and formation of identity and work practices that has been recognised by the government and the management team (head teachers) alike. We have seen that space is involved in the formation of occupational of identity in different ways as shown above in **Table 1**. As discussed in the summary of findings this study shows that space gives a sense of continuity to employees and in this way identity is constructed and modified through perceived spaces meaning that individuals utilise their imaginary perceptions to construct their daily practices. Organisational space provides employees with a sense of expectations and idealised performance, and what we have shown here is that individuals utilise space to reflect back on their perceived expectations and idealised space for their professional role and their daily work activities. As such, space is utilised as a tool to create their jurisdictional control. In this way, this study shows that space offers support that assists in the development of a sense of belonging, and that space is a fundamental tool in helping workers recognise and become protective of their sense of belonging. This links with Goffman's (1961) argument that all

institutions take identity away from individuals. Next, this study shows that space sustains hierarchy by establishing a daily routine that excludes and isolates groups of workers. What we show here is that space creates a sense of dislocation and isolation amongst staff creating a sense of tension between the management team and teachers. In the same vein this study shows that space helps uphold in-group identity, where space is used as a fundamental tool in representing individuals' self-coherence and self-image. This leads us to the last way of utilising Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space in formation and reformation of identity. As such, this study shows that change in space represents prospects for renegotiating both personal and public opinions of self. What we have shown here is that a change in the physical environment at the workplace produces prospects for renegotiating both personal and public opinions of the self.

To put this into context, in the above analysis what we have discussed is that both the government and head teachers used powerful discourses to sell the new transition. What we have seen is that there were often political moves that took place in this transition. It appeared that the head teachers used their position power to reconstruct schools according to 21<sup>st</sup> century rhetoric, but at the same time we can also see beneath the actual processes of change (good examples of physical space being used to diminish the control or the influence of power of the staff/management). Although the government talk about the need to get rid of these splits, what we see is that when it comes down to that level this has not been achieved, because this level is where they have positional power to reconfigure their schools so they differentiate between bigger offices and smaller offices, bigger rooms and smaller rooms. They are able to differentiate quite cleverly between that

because you cannot get rid of differentiation in a hierarchical institution. Hence, getting rid of few walls does not get rid of hierarchy; the hierarchy is still there so getting rid of few walls might give a different purpose suggesting control (Dale and Burrell 2008). There is clearly a dichotomy, tensions, different objectives, different views and different expectations of the teachers which are missed by policy writers and managers. The power that is imposed on these teachers leads them to behave differently in seeking a new way of being a teacher in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This ultimately leads to identity construction as a result of trying either to respect the government policies of the new space or fighting against it. That represents a new picture of a new teacher within that perspective.


What this thesis shows is that the transition from an old institution to a new one is perceived by those who initiate this process in a different way from those who are on the receiving end. They see it as a way to achieve certain objectives which are seen in the light of an objective and functionalist view of government. What is new here is that we have shown the complexity of human behaviour in real life: when it comes in contact with the aspiration of government it creates a new situation. So a teacher's identity changes from what the teacher was at the time of the old building to the teacher of a new building. Therefore, what we have seen in this study is that we have multiple identities which would suggest that the government cannot predict what the effect would be. As such, this study, through the interpretivist perspective shows that there are multiple identities. From this study we have seen three formation identities; namely; the teacher conformist – one who conforms to rules and regulations; the resisting teacher – one who opposes the imposed changes; and the ambivalent teacher – one who is not sure or is indifferent about the new change. This is where



the teacher goes in between. What we have seen in this study is that the new changes at the workplace have brought about such new identities. To summarise this contribution, here we have shown how Lefebvre's thinking on space can be utilised in analysing the implications of spatial change to identity and the tensions created. This is a new way of thinking to study the effects of organisational space.

### ***9.3.2. Explaining how spatial identity creates identity crisis***

The second contribution that I make in this study is that it is a Lefebvre informed spatial study that explains how spatial identity or its destabilisations create identity crisis through space. Lefebvre's thinking on space is used to explain why such changes in organisational space create identity crisis. What we are able to explain here is that Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space and his clarification of conflict and fluidity inform explanations of spatial identity crisis, destabilisations and chaos caused by spatial change. **Table 2** below explains in simple terms the tensions created between conceived, perceived and lived space. The table is a Lefebvre informed analysis and explanation of how changes in space destabilise identity or create identity crisis. The question which arises here is: how can Lefebvre help me to understand the relation between identity and space? As discussed in the summary of findings, we have noticed in this study a number of conflicts, and that space has been used as a political tool in making sense of such changes. Below I explain **Table 2** in detail.

How space is involved in occupational identity 	Tensions created in spaces	Brief examples
Space gives a sense of continuity to employees	Conceived vs Perceived	Tension between the idealised space imposed by the management team and teachers' perception of what they imagined their workplace to be, e.g. tension around the removal of personal spaces
	Perceived vs Lived	Teachers being uncomfortable in the new organisational space. They had to negotiate their daily professional activities and showed their frustration at the lack of space and they did this by complaining about it.
	Conceived vs Lived	Teachers had to be at front [performing] stage at all times and as a result of this they looked for hidden places to protect their professional status. For instance, they did not expect and did not appreciate not having a private space.
Space provides employees with a sense of expectations and idealised performance.	Conceived vs Lived	Teachers being protective of their jurisdictional control. They showed this through passive resistance and the creation of territorial spatial jurisdictions in their departmental staffroom and in their teaching classroom.
	Perceived vs Lived	There was a recognition of spatial control and this provided a sense of loss of spatial territorial boundaries.
Space assists in the development of a	Perceived vs Lived	Teachers recognised that they had lost the power to personalise their workplace and they resisted this change

<b>sense of belonging.</b>	Conceived vs Perceived	Teachers recognised that the management team had removed their personal space and they resisted this change by personalising their teaching classrooms in a way that represented their professional responsibilities.
<b>Space sustains hierarchy by establishing a daily routine that excludes and isolates groups of workers.</b>	Conceived vs Lived  Perceived vs Lived	Teachers' awareness of isolation amongst staff and the restrictions of interactions with their work colleagues. This created tension between the management team and teachers.  Sense of division amongst staff. Teachers felt that they were unnoticed at the workplace and this created a loss of trust.
<b>Space helps uphold in-groups identity.</b>	Conceived vs Lived	There was a resistance to personalised space. In this way teachers became aware of what they are and what they were not.
<b>Change in space presents prospects for renegotiating both personal and public opinions of self.</b>	Perceived vs Lived	The public perception was that the teachers were at a world class workplace and they have it all easy. The reality was that teachers had to renegotiate their professional role. This caused tension between teachers and public perceptions. Teachers claimed that outsiders have a wrong image of what it is like to be a teacher. Reality is completely different.

**Table 2 Explaining tensions created in terms of Lefebvre's thinking**

First, we have noticed that space gives a sense of continuity to employees, so when space changes you have a lack of continuity and you have a tension between conceived space and perceived space. So the tension here is the contradiction

between what the management perceived to be the appropriate change and the teachers' perceived or idealised space. We equally notice that there was a tension between perceived and lived space. The tensions did not stop here; they were evident between conceived and experienced space. For instance, teachers questioned why their private space had been taken away from them. Teachers in this instance had to renegotiate their daily professional activities, and they felt uncomfortable about it. Thus, here we notice how a change in space destabilises identity. This is because space provides certain expectations leading to a variety of conflicts and tensions. Resistance is one of the key concepts to help us explain these tensions. Interestingly, in this study it appeared that the teachers' reaction to their occupational identity status being threatened was that of resistance. It became apparent there was a tension between the management team and teachers with regards to the concept of 'hot-desking'. They resisted this change by claiming their teaching classrooms, such as by leaving personal belongings on the desk. This was because they did not feel respected by the management team, and that was because they did not have control of their space although this is part of their occupational identity. So the way they see themselves is as having control of their profession, and one way of achieving this is through personalised space. Thus teachers showed resistance to the imposed changes when they sorted out their hidden places to get away from the performing stage and by personalising their classroom so that it represented their occupational identity.

Second, we notice that space provides employees with a sense of expectations and idealised performance. The tension created here was between conceived and lived space along with perceived and lived space. The tension here is that teachers did not approve of the planned spaces suggesting that it would affect territorial boundaries

which they deemed to be important for them, and as such individuals reflected back on their ‘imagined’ space and compared it with their lived one. In this way, they were able to recognise that their space was being controlled which made them feel that they had lost their territorial boundaries. This led to individuals feeling lost and losing their professional identity. The question which this study then asks is that if we assume that space is a product and a necessity of employees’ daily working practices and engagement, to what extent is that assumption accepted by participants? Equally, this research shows that the domain of space introduces new expectations and responsibilities to inhabitants and this was demonstrated through their day-to-day activities.

Third, we notice that space sustains hierarchy by establishing a daily routine that excludes and isolates groups of workers. What we explain here is that through daily practices participants reflected back on the imposed changes (‘conceived spaces’) from their lived space to create a tension between the management team and teachers. At the same time, their perceived space clashed with their lived one because through their reflection on changes of space they felt that the new space created clear divisions between staff, and sub-identities within their workplace. That change led to individuals feeling undervalued and lost in space which led to identity crisis.

Fourth, we notice that space assists in the development of a sense of belonging and participants reflected back on why they were not allowed to have freedom in constructing their working environment when it represented their professional role. As such, these changes led to a tension when participants reflected back between the conceived space provided by the government and their perceived space which

reflected their ‘imaginary’ professionalism. As discussed in the analysis chapter it appears that the government and the head teachers adopted a functionalist view and conceived a space that would improve working conditions, assuming that this would have a positive effect on the teaching profession. For example, the government talked about removing the ‘*unhealthy dichotomy*’ but in reality that appears to have been more difficult than portrayed by the government. In this research, it appeared that the rationale behind the policy makers’ design of the physical space was to create flexible and non-dedicated workspaces, which meant that in theory all employees, regardless of their position, would use the same workspace. As a result, they introduced an open shared space or ‘hot-desking’ concept. This physical change, however, had the opposite effect to expectations. It appeared that such changes did not remove physical boundaries and boundaries in the workplace: they merely threatened occupational identities, because they limited teachers’ abilities to affirm categorisations of distinctiveness. In the new organisational space teachers are finding it difficult to find that collectiveness. This finding provides us with an example which shows that the government have underestimated the complexity of human behaviour and possible tensions between different domains of space (i.e., conceived and perceived spaces).

Fifth, we notice that space upheld in-group identity and this was shown by teachers reflecting back on the conceived space together with the performed space and that led to resisting being told what to do. Through recognition of planned, imposed spaces participants became aware of what they are and what they are not, which led to tension and resistance. As a consequence, we noticed that change in space represented prospects for renegotiating both personal and public opinions of self. It

appeared that space was used as a key tool in communicating individuals' sense of self and their professional identity. In this study, we notice that there is a conflict between perceived space and lived space and as such participants felt that the representation of the organisational space communicates a wrong message to society, and in reality they felt that they had to renegotiate their professional role. That caused a tension between what was perceived it would be like in that institution and the reality 'lived space'.

To summarise, the second contribution is to show how Lefebvre's thinking helps us to explain identity tensions created through spatial change. What we have noticed here is that space gives sense of continuity, and if you take space away from individuals there is an issue with continuity which matters because people use the perceived space to construct themselves. Therefore we have a conflict between the new space as imagined by others and the one perceived by me, and this causes the conflict. So what we have explained in this study is that we have used Lefebvre's framework in order to explain something that we observe. We observe just people being unhappy and Lefebvre helps us to make sense of that. This leads to our third contribution.

### ***9.3.3. Moving Lefebvre's work forward by bringing Ibarra's thinking in to make sense of identity formation***

This study makes its third significant contribution by moving beyond Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space to make use of Ibarra's (1999) conceptualisation of identity to study the formation of occupational identity through space. Therefore, this study explains how space is involved in the construction of occupation identity and

that space is used to uphold identity. As discussed throughout this thesis, Lefebvre thinks in terms of tensions and contradictions as he offers a Marxist explanation of the conceptualisation of space, while Ibarra studies identity work by focusing on reconstructions and ambiguity. By bringing the two thinkers together, we can suggest that the construction of identity is a complex issue marked by social interactions, tensions, ambiguities and ambivalent feelings towards dominant spaces. As a consequence of this thinking, one's occupational identity is subjected to change in response to changes in space and workplace technology. This leads to individual uncertainty and insecurity about their professional role which we refer to as ambivalence and ambiguity. Another consequence of this change in occupational space/identity is, I argue, that if managers do not recognise space as a manifestation of occupational identity employees will resist and react by creating their own hidden spaces.

With reference to Ibarra's (1999) and Ibarra and Barbulescu's (2010) work we concentrate on how an identity is acquired and changes. In the earlier work, Ibarra (1999), as discussed in previous sections, focuses on the formation of identity following change and constitutes a theory of identity formation that scrutinises the socialisation process regarding identity. This research expands on her concept of formation concerning occupational identity and seeks to explore Ibarra's work in a new professional context. What this study shows is that in stigma work people are constrained by various variables about themselves. So identity is always about protecting yourself from being caught out. Certain categories of people find it difficult to cope with that. Her work focuses on role transition amongst in-service professionals in business. To test for generic applicability, her concept of formation



of identity can be used to ground the present research, considering that professional education provides a useful point of comparison which can assess provisional selves as a definite function of creating a new occupational identity.

This research moves beyond the concepts of role transition and provisional selves. What this research shows is that when there is a physical change in the organisation, which changes the way that workers relate to, and identify with each other, then they feel uncertain about how the alteration affects their sense of connectiveness, position, respect and values in their organisation. Thus, this research builds on the comprehension of how individuals' sense of self influences their perception of, and responses to, such changes. It shows that employees have a strong sense of connection with space. It appears that the formation and modification of occupational identity is constructed through the personal attachment to, and identification with, the places in which individuals work. The acknowledgment of physical transformation influences their perception of and willingness to embrace change. Teachers at both institutions conceptualised themselves in spatial terms, and in terms that reflected their professional responsibilities. More importantly, this study shows that individuals are very protective of their profession, and space is one component where trust and autonomy is communicated to outsiders. It appeared that the interpretations of spatial objects interrelate, intersecting each other, and thus form uncertain identities. This rests at the core of numerous spatial tensions because spatial territory is the foundation for the formation and modification of an occupational identity.

In this study we have explored individuals' responses to spatial change and have seen that these responses can be contradictory and ambiguous at times. This research

indicates that teachers teach and work in a self-contradictory space and this is because there are noticeable boundaries distinguishing between teachers and the management staff, demonstrating a structural position and capability in which they feature as separate from the management team. As such this ambiguity at this school leads teachers to participate in a multifaceted development of identity work in which they accentuate themselves ambivalently. To conclude, what I have elaborated here is the whole construction process. Because of such changes the new individual personality has arrived within this. Even then we notice ambivalence and ambiguity because different teachers emerge and not one teacher. So here we move away from this notion of objectivism into a plurality of identities.

To summarise, using Lefebvre's (1991) framework this study has shown and explained differences in how the change in organisational space is perceived and symbolised by different inhabitants, particularly how it is understood via the rearrangement of teaching practices as discussed in the previous section. Through Lefebvre's (1991) conceptualisation of space we have shown how space mediates identity in different ways. For example, we have explained the tensions created between conceived, perceived and lived spaces, and the identity crises to which these lead. This study shows that the transitional organisational space is used as a political tool in reflecting, shaping and reconstructing the teaching profession. Such tools reproduce fundamental characteristics of the introduction of the new organisational space in an educational surrounding and particular inferences for the future of the teaching profession. When narratives of this change of space are scrutinised collectively, it is revealed that such managerialist attempts create the challenge of managing power dynamics in the workplace – which was an apparent

theme at both organisations. The above discussion shows that the change in the organisational space plays an important role in forming narratives of teachers' occupational identity.

Equally, through the lens provided by Ibarra (1999), this study uncovers crucial transformations for teachers in the nature of their work (teaching), standards, responsibilities, spatial jurisdictions, spatial boundaries, loss of privacy, loss of trust, and autonomy, and resulting ambivalence and ambiguity. This study shows that identity is temporary and spatially situated and contested. For instance, the narratives in the findings chapter suggest that there were day-to-day struggles and tensions between how teachers imagined and then experienced their teaching spaces/classrooms. As such, in this study I have identified a new, nuanced way of studying both, the topics of space and occupational identity. This is an important contribution to the field of organisational studies because there has been no research to date raising awareness of how space forms occupational identity and vice versa. Hence, this research opens an interesting debate in the organisation studies literature by showing that identity is mediated through space. Therefore, in the next section we will be elaborating on the debates that this study opens up by reintroducing Lefebvre's and Ibarra's thinking on organisational space and identity.

#### **9.4. Furthering the debates in existing literature**

As noted in section 2.3.3 in the literature review, in discussing power relations, the existing literature suggests that individuals' daily activities and interactions in organisations are influenced by the planned designed spaces and they have their own motivation in questioning and restructuring these spaces. What was noticed to be

missing from the literature is a study that scrutinises the link between social interactions and physical appearances through a space–action debate. It is within the space–action debate that this thesis opens an interesting discussion in the organisation studies literature.

#### ***9.4.1. Planned organisational space and power relations debate***

If we refer back to the literature in the space–action discussion from page 57 to 62 in Dale and Burrell’s study we notice that they warn their readers that resistant activities are dominant in organisations. Their discussion implies that ‘enactment’ objectifies and does this by realising managerial powers that are rooted in architecture design. In this study, we have explored this relationship and we have shown and explained how the planned organisational space is organised in a way that represents new power relations in organisations, and the way we make sense of such new relations from studying the purpose behind these spatial formations. This study goes one step further by opening a debate around the tensions caused through such changes. As such, this study shows that space cannot be treated as a neutral backdrop to participants but it is created and (re)created through politics and ideology (Lefebvre, 1991; Casey, 1993; Learmonth and Harding, 2006). In this instance it appears that space is used as a political tool in decision-making. As discussed in the analysis chapter, teachers at both institutions have seen a complete transition of their organisational space which has brought about new teaching practices. Therefore, this study shows an awareness that space is inhabited by employees and it is part of their working practices. As such it is fundamental to the formation of the relations between them, to the developing (or not) of identities, and to the possibility of new

expectations that they are continuously positioning themselves into (Pearson and Richards 1994).

Through Lefebvre's (1991) work, this study provides a novel contribution to the literature by exploring how the new organisational spaces were formed in daily activities along with the relation of conceived, perceived and lived spaces. Specifically, it opens a debate on Hancock and Spicer (2011) who argued that unusual layouts are rooted in management's efforts to adapt workers' identities into instruments acceptable to the company. This study develops hypothetically a holistic comprehension by bringing together the relationship between the social and physical aspects of organisational space. From a Foucauldian perspective we can see how the notion of discourse power constructs the workday practices and also work identities. According to Foucault (1977, p 135) the body has been noticed in the function of the '*object and target of power*' ever since the classical era. In the course of the precise arrangement, separation and scheduling of bodily movements '*a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body, mastering it, making it pliable, ready at all times, turning silently into the automatism of habit*' (Foucault, 1997, p 136). Hence, 'docile bodies' represent a form of power since power associated with bodily movements turn out to be replicable (Gillen, 2006). This is because some forms of bodily movements are connected with particular social identities (Dale and Burrell, 2008; 2011). For example, teachers are considered as being educators and they position themselves in front of the classroom, talking in a professional manner. For Hoffman (1959), individuals take up responsibilities as if they are acting on a stage whether deliberately or instinctively. As such, in the course of such routines people create their social and personal identities. Frequently, routines are

sensationalised and/or romanticised to underline the significance of specific functions or even to correspond to the prospect of audiences. One method of idealising responsibilities, for example, is to over-accomplish bodily movements that are generally approved to be in connection with these responsibilities. Driven by his approach to organisational space this study draws links between my findings and these theories.

#### ***9.4.2. Non-physical space debate and forms of resistance***

This study opens an important debate on Elsbach's (2003; 2004) work on '*non-territorial office environment*'. In her study Elsbach (2003; 2004) scrutinises the way that office artefacts hold occupational identity. She indicates that when there is an organisational transformation, for example the relocation to a new workplace environment, there is a change in the manner in which workers narrate and recognise each other and their work place. In such surroundings, workers might feel doubtful in relation to the way the alteration will form their view of connectedness, usefulness, position or significance within their institution. The present study builds on such prior discussions, and expands on them in terms of how new organisational space helps workers to build a sense of 'who I am', 'what is my role' and 'why I am working in this given office'. The findings from this study suggest that organisational space is the vehicle within which entities are formed and re-formed and time is the frequency according to which individuals seek to (re)establish their occupational identity (Munro and Jordan, 2013).

Elsbach and Bhattacharya (2001) argued that employees' work identity is shaped when they acknowledge what they are and what they are not. This area of research

has been neglected by previous researchers and this study opens an important discussion in the literature here. This study shows that even when space was taken away, teachers were protective of their given space and this was shown through their territorial jurisdiction of space. They created physical boundaries at their given space because it was deemed to be important in the formation and modification of their occupational identity. In effect this was part of their idealised space because teachers used their given space and transformed it into territorial space to show others that ‘this is my own space and it is important for me as a teacher’. Hence, this is an important finding because it is an element of occupational identity, and again this issue has not been appraised by previous research. Where this research extends the literature is by showing that space creates expectations, because when one becomes a professional it is assumed one will have one’s own space(s). In this research, I found that teachers had idealised ideas about space. One thing that transpired was that imagined space related to an idealised ‘perfect situation’. So the question which we want to ask here is how space is involved in the formation of identity. The argument here is that it includes some ideal spaces. So in this research it appears that occupational identity has an ideal model of what to do (as discussed above) and this is always situated in space in time.

Equally, this study extends the debate on liminal spaces by exploring the utilisation and experiences of liminal spaces in relation to central spaces within this power dynamic. This study advances the discussion of Knights (1990, p 329), who argues that organisational space is a ‘*material and symbolic resource*’ and may be utilised as an artefact of authority. More specifically, it furthers this discussion by linking it back to Lefebvre’s work, showing and explaining that workspace matters, and that

its importance is only recognised once space is taken away. This point was recently picked up by Shortt (2014) where she explored the experience of hidden spaces in relation to central ones within organisational power dynamics; in this study we explore this concept in an educational setting. Most of the mainstream literature on space concentrates on the main structural spaces that symbolise organisational culture, and little attention has been paid to lived experiences and ‘between spaces’ (hidden spaces). This study joins Shortt (2014), contributing to the literature by showing the importance of hidden spaces by showing how spaces are formed by employees as essential and significant to their day-to-day lives and furthers this by exploring how space can form and modify occupational identity in different ways.

By expanding on Shortt’s (2014) discussion, this study shows that the removal of personal belongings leads to the establishment of the collection of unusual objects but these collections become the definition of a total institution because people end up finding these different collections. In my research the way in which teachers adore not their body or objects they carry around but the classroom, became conventional practice within the school. Organisational studies are full of examples where the attempt by management to contain individual expressions over a place or body or things leads to further dialectic control and resistance. In this study what we see is a collective form of resistance in the classroom that prevails (Peltonen, 2012). The question which arises from this study is why does it continue in this case and not in other cases? Why did it work in this case? Is it because of the nature of the school or profession? It could be argued that what teachers are doing is showing students’ work and so you are not just decoupling the teacher from the class but you are



alienating teachers from the class as well, and that is a difficult position for managers to be in.

This study explores and explains the importance of the personalisation of space on identity in great depth. In doing so, it contributes to the arguments put forward by Sommer (1974) and Sundstrom (1986) who posit the personalisation of space as the intentional decoration or alteration of a setting by its inhabitants to reproduce their identities. Through the personalisation of space teachers communicated their personal and in-group individuality, their position at their institution and their group relationships (Konar and Sundstrom 1986; Wells, 2000; Fineman, 2003; Wells *et al.*, 2007; Munro and Jordan, 2013). This study argues that everything happens in a space and as such space plays an important role in forming and reinforcing teachers' occupational identity. This is because through the personalisation of space teachers formed their spatial jurisdictional territories and this was deemed to be important in the formation of their professional role. This study contributes to the debate that everything happens in space and that space communicates in-group identity but is also used as a form of control. In this study, we have seen the way that teachers personalised their classroom in order to create an awareness of their workspace, and to help their practised control of their environments, and to regulate their social interactions with their work colleagues and the management team (Brown 1987).

#### ***9.4.3. Protection of professional identity and the importance of narratives***

This study, through understanding the formation of identity via Ibarra's (1999) lens and Lefebvre's (1999) conceptualisation of space, adds to Abbott's (1986) work on '*The System of Professions*'. The main idea that he puts across is that studying the

tasks or work activities of occupations is the key to understanding transformations in professionalisation. He explores a new method to apply to studies of professions by concentrating on the issue of jurisdictional negotiations amongst occupations. His central idea on jurisdictions concerns the notion of the right to control the provision of particular services and activities. In later works, Abbott (1988, 1991) perceives jurisdictional differences/struggles for control over 'arenas' of 'work' as fundamental actions between professions. Whilst in agreement with Abbott's (1988; 1991) idea that profession is about jurisdiction and control, it is argued that he was talking about professional jurisdictions (i.e. lawyers have jurisdictional/expertise power) and in this study I argue that jurisdictions are about what you say, what you wear, and how you act in your own space. Jurisdictional control in this research is shown through physical territorial jurisdictions/boundaries that teachers form and transform in order to communicate to outsiders their occupational identity. In this research, teachers protected their occupational identity by showing clear physical territorial boundaries in their workplace. This interlinks with the previous contribution on power dynamics and how it is mediated through space. For instance, at both institutions, departments had clear physical boundaries that represented the particular group of teachers. This was shown by the way that corridors leading to different departments were personalised in a way that represented the department. There was the understanding that all teachers used their departmental staffroom and would be very protective of it.

In furthering Ibarra's (1999) work on occupational identity this study furthers Evan's (2008) work around the notion of professionalism to make sense of the relationship between professionalisation and space. In her work she shows that professionalism is

internally constructed, it is not what it is but is rather what it is imagined to be. She argues that professions and professionalism are constantly changing. There has been a change from studying what constitutes a profession to the broadening of professionalism, to other matters within the discipline, including matters around trust, values, ethics and control. This study reveals that organisational space communicates trust and constructs a form of control for professionals. This discussion leads us to explore Evett's (2006) work where she argues that occupational professionalism is based on the notion that within a particular professional group there is a mutual authority which incorporates trust between the manager and employee as well as employee and customers. Trust, in this instance, is based on an individual's capability to do his/her work, and also on expertise gained from education, training and licensing. In this study, it is argued that the distribution and usage of space represents the hierarchical divisions, and communicates trust and importance in the organisation. For the teachers, the allocation of personal space communicated professional values and control. And hence, the structural changes at both institutions communicated lack of trust and this is an important component in forming occupational identity. For example, it appeared that teachers felt isolated in their new organisational space and felt uneasy about it because they valued the importance of collegiality as being crucial for their teaching profession. As such, one can argue that the physical space can be used as a tool for excluding and isolating professionals within the institution. So far, we have shown that identity is part of an interpretation of spatial organisation. By utilising a particular space in the organisation we are able to understand how identity of locality is formed and modified.

As we have noted previously, a main theme in this study is the tensions created through spatial change which has important repercussions in terms of the destabilisation of identity. In studying these tensions, Ibarra's (1999) work enables us to see identity as fluid and complex which leads us to discuss uncertainties and ambiguities. In this way, we revisit Merton's (1976) work who perceives ambivalent identity as either 'temporary' or challenging 'states' and opened up a discussion around ambiguity and confusion. This finding suggests that ambivalent identity was temporary but more importantly this created multiple identities to which teachers related themselves. As such ambivalence was a foundation of strength and distinctiveness for teachers at school and in this way inter-subjectivities are useful for teachers in their changed roles as a method of delivering better understanding of status and legitimacy. For example, in the analysis chapter we discussed teachers constructing their work identities around their professional role, their status at school, their expert activities, their legitimacy power (dynamic powers) and their individual relationships with students and their colleagues. It appears that teachers look for claiming a desired identity of ambivalence which includes a mixture of differentiation and inclusion.

Last but not least, by unpacking the notion of ambiguity and ambivalence, this study reinforces an important discussion around the complexity of narratives. As highlighted by Llewellyn (2001) this study reinforces the suggestion that narratives are complex, and that we have different interpretations of narratives depending on our personal experiences. This has been identified as an underdeveloped area of research by Brown and Humphreys (2006) who posit that there needs to be more research into how narratives of space shape teachers' occupational identity. In this

instance it suggests that the planned narratives emphasised by the government initiatives are different from how teachers narrate them, and their narratives depend on how teachers experienced the new organisational space. As such, one could argue that government policy statements that the new buildings will improve teachers' morale and meet 21<sup>st</sup> century educational demands could be described as impractical, because people who actually experience the change might have different interpretations of it, as we have seen in this study. Therefore, this transition leads to the construction of ambivalence and ambiguity within the teaching profession.

To conclude: the complexity of identity is evident here and, as argued by Ibarra (1991), identity is situational and temporary. In this study we have shown and explained how Lefebvre's (1991) ideas can be incorporated to study occupational identity. Throughout the thesis, through Lefebvre's lens we were able to appreciate the tensions, conflicts and oppositions inherent in spatial change. This research has shown how space can be used as a political tool in (re)formation of identities with implications for professionalism. As such, this study makes a novel contribution to the space-action debate literature and incorporates it with the formation of identity. This study further shows that there are multiple, contradictory narratives in making sense of spatial changes which lead to uncertainties. If we look at all those teachers individually, from their narratives and their behaviour we find that they are each constructing their identities in different ways. Therefore it is impossible for the government or management to construct a single identity. Instead their actions in creating change lead to the constructions of various identities which are manifested and contested in the teachers' narratives. In this way, we end up with complexity of formation of identity. What we can learn from this research is that when we make

decisions, or when we design space, it will construct different identities across the whole group of professionals, in this case teachers in the organisations. An individual's identity constantly changes and we cannot generalise that changes are the same for everyone. Individuals may react differently, not only in terms of the identities they form and negotiate but also through the utilisation of liminal spaces.

### **9.5. Contribution to practice**

This research offers a number of unique insights into the UK further educational bureaucratic daily practices. The topic of education is constantly in the limelight of media scrutiny and there are very few researchers that undertake such insightful and comprehensive research studies in the educational context. In this research existing interpretations of educational government policies is maintained by teachers' respectful reproduction of the space that they inhabited on daily basis. Accordingly, the practical contribution that this thesis makes is the call for government policy-making, the management team and teachers to engage in greater collaboration when making architectural changes in the educational institutions. This thesis identifies that a lack of a shared vision permeates across different levels of the educational hierarchy. Findings from the analysis suggest that consultations with teachers on changes to structural organisational space within educational sector should be taken into consideration before implementation of change. This study shows that workers award special meaning to their working environment and in response to a radical, unexpected change teachers will resist and will alter the space regardless according to their needs. As such, the change in organisational space influences teachers' formation of professional identity including how they collaborate and interact with their colleagues.

In this study we saw that the removal of the main staffroom led to a disconfirmation of expectations held by teachers, to invariably interplay with one's professional identity. As a form of control, the use and design of space across the new organisational spaces at both institutions isolated and segregated teachers from their colleagues, sending out a clear message that the teachers' new professional identity is one of 'all work and no play'. Importantly, when government and the management team plan to spend over £32m on a new organisational space, they need to consult with their employees, no matter what their place in the political hierarchy. A core reason for this is because teachers utilise and live in the space on daily basis, and by keeping them in the loop they may be more inclined to change (rather than resist change) if their expectations were confirmed (rather than disconfirmed).

The findings of this study can also be applied in other professionalised contexts such as banking, accountancy, medicine, the law and so on. This is because such professional groupings also have a strong sense of professional identity. For example, in the research that I am undertaking in the banking industry, I have found that the bank is investing £2 billion to change the design of the head offices in the UK and abroad. The management, in this case, is planning to use space as a political tool to shape and control employee behaviour which will have implications for occupational identity. They are doing this by adapting employees' work practices whereby they are moving from an open shared office to cubical (closed) offices. From the initial findings of this other research, the employees were clearly perceiving the power dynamics associated with this change through allocation of spaces whereby they identified the implications of this on their work practices and identities. At the same time, in this research, it appears that employees appear to be

uncertain about the change: they recognise the benefits of the change but equally believe that their professional role will be affected as a result of this.

## **9.6. Limitations and further research**

Just like in other studies, this research has its limitations. In this study I concentrate on an educational sector whereby it is controlled and governed by governments. In this study I concentrate on one specific form of organisation and we ought to be aware of the fact that there are other forms of organisational settings that we need to take into account. For instance, it would be interesting to observe and scrutinise how other type of organisations organise their organisation by utilising space. One example that we could use here is to focus on a private owned institutions such as banks. In the recent years, the banking sector has transformed their physical organisational space and they continue to transform to do so in the forthcoming future. From my work experience at Santander, I learnt that they are investing a substantial amount of money in their new organisational space across their three head offices in the UK and across the world. It would be interesting to investigate how such changes form and transformational employee's occupational identity in this context.

Arguably, space at workplace matters but maybe we could explore other aspects of how space forms occupational identity. The majority of literature on work space looks at dominant spaces that symbolise organisational culture has overlooked the lived experiences of such spaces. I argue that when we scrutinise how space forms occupational identity we should not just focus on dominant spaces. This study shows that hidden spaces play an important role in forming occupational identity and



further research could scrutinise this by adapting Goffman's approach. This is because as this study reveals, hidden spaces play a crucial role in the lives of those working in organisations because employees seek for creating private spaces and physical boundaries to protect their professionalism. Up to now, the importance of hidden spaces is treated as unproblematic in the organisational literature and this research suggests that is not the case.

Again, this study is centred on the UK cultural setting and thus it could be argued that this study concentrates on a national tradition to prevailing social relationships which could be perceived as usual of a collective culture (Hofstede 1981). It would be interesting to have a comparative case study scrutinising how the changes in the organisational space forms and transforms employees' occupational identity at different national settings. A research could concentrate on the educational sector where they have experienced new structural organisational space changes. There could also be a research scrutinising two different institutions from two different countries. In this way, we could draw out similarities and differences of the outcomes from two national settings.

Furthermore, although this research investigates how the changes in the organisational spaces forms occupational identity I could have overlooked the generation of other forms of social space, including gendered space. In the future, there could be further research which deals with this exclusion by exploring the construction of space based on the comprehensive arrangements of social controls including, gender, social class and sexuality orientation respectively. In this study I did not pay particular attention to gender, social class and sexuality orientation. As such, it would be interesting to study these social controls and examine whether we

have a different outcome or not. Equally, in this research focus is only awarded to how new organisational space forms teachers' occupational identity. What is not taken into account are student's perception of the new organisational space. Indeed, students just like teachers experience organisational space on daily basis. Thus, a further study could compare the differences and similarities of teachers' and students' perception of the new organisational space at the same institution.

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## **11. Appendices**

### **Appendix one: Interviews**

Physical Environment and Professional Identity

Professional Teachers

Interview Guide

#### **Rubric**

- a) The purpose of the interview is to gather interviewee's experiences, interpretations, understandings, perceptions and meanings of their role as professional teachers with particular emphasis upon space, groupings and professional identity.
  - b) Important to gather interviewees comments in their own words, own context and own order – use prompts but do not impose structure.
  - c) Request permission to record and transcribe the interview.
  - d) Request the interviewee to read through and correct any errors in the transcript.
  - e) Remind interviewee that all comments are confidential unless written permission to attribute is give.
- 

#### **Self – Description**

If not already known make a note and/or ask for basic personal details such as:-

Gender;

Age;

Time in profession;

Previous non-teaching experience;

Any specialism;

Professional qualifications;

Handicaps or special needs

## **Teaching**

If you were writing a brochure for parents and students, in your own words how would you describe the College?

Please tell me about your experiences teaching at this College; if they do not say ask directly how long they have been employed there.

Please describe any different roles that you have held during your time here, for example Head of Teaching Group or Specialist advisor.

To what extent does your life and work here correspond to your expectations of life as a professional teacher?

Please would you describe the special skills, attributes and abilities that a professional teacher needs to possess in order to be able to function effectively in today's modern teaching environment?

Do you feel that anyone can learn to become a professional teacher?

Do we all have the necessary skills, attributes and abilities?

In your experience how has teaching changed over time?

Particularly, how has teaching changed since you were the age of your current students and how has teaching changed since you entered the profession?

How would you expect professional teaching to change in the foreseeable future?

I have heard discussion of the concept of 'modern teaching' and the 'modern teacher'. Please could you tell me from where those terms originated and also, what do those terms mean to you?

How does a professional modern teach differ from any other type of teacher or professional teacher?

### **Teaching – Policy Issues**

Do you feel that current teaching policies, both in this College and Nationally (for this age group of students) reflect the concept of modern teaching?

Please would you tell me about your training, both your previous training and the continuing professional development that you are receiving now (or very recently).

Do you feel that the training you have and/or are receiving is adequate to meet the needs of the profession today?

### **Space and Buildings**

Earlier you summarised the College as though you were writing a brochure. Moving on to think about how the buildings and the use of space in your College might reflect the demands of modern teaching how would you describe the College in terms of its buildings and use of space?

Please would you tell me whether you feel that your buildings and space meet the needs and demands of modern professional teaching? In what ways - what examples can you give, to show how and why it does or does not?

Are there any areas in the building(s) that you feel particularly safe or unsafe? Why?

Are there any areas or spaces which you feel are yours and do not belong to other teachers, students or groups?

Do others know how you feel and respect your views?

Please will you describe the differences that you perceive between the new College buildings and use of space and the old College buildings and use of space.

Has the change improved the use of space relevant to your principal subject and subject needs?

Are there any particular aspects of the new buildings and use of space that you particularly like and particularly dislike?

If you had the opportunity what would you change? Why?

Summarising your view of the buildings and space at the College, how does the current availability and use of space help or hinder your ability to enact the role of a professional, modern teacher?

### **Groups**

Thinking now about the way in which you and your colleagues work collectively and collaboratively; please will you tell me about the groups, both formal and informal that you can identify in the College.

Are there any groups to which you are allocated formally and any groups with which you associate voluntarily?

How would you describe the differences in the characteristics of the groups?

Do you feel that any of the groups believe that they have 'claimed' or 'own' any particular territory or space within the College?



Do you believe that the term 'tribe' is an accurate description of their behaviour and attitude towards others?

Please will you tell me how you recognise the boundaries between groups?

Do any of the groups hold formal meetings or have informal gatherings or regularly meet say at lunchtime to eat together?

Do you associate in this way with a particular group?

### **Self – Feelings and Perceptions**

Please would you tell me about your motivation: what helped you to decide to become a professional teacher and what sustains that motivation in today's environment?

Please will you describe how you feel when you are enacting the role of a professional teacher?

Are there any issues or difficulties or benefits arising from integrating your life as a professional tutor and your wider social and family life?

### **Self – Professional Identity**

Thinking now about your perception of yourself as a modern professional teacher, to what extent does being a modern professional teacher have special meaning or significance for you?

How does it make you feel to be a professional teacher?

Do you feel that being a professional teacher influences the way that other people regard you? (If not raised by the interviewee, probe whether it matters whether someone knew the interviewee before they were a professional teacher and how their relationship might have changed through becoming a professional teacher).

Please will you comment upon any influences which the current buildings and space have upon your sense of identity as a professional, modern teacher: for example, has a new building made you feel more or less proud to be associated with the College or the profession?

Finally, are there any issues or points that you would like to raise that we have not covered in our discussions today?

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**Close**

- a) Thank the interviewee for their time and their help.
- b) Explain that a transcript will now be prepared and sent to them for any amendments of further comments that they would like to add.
- c) Reconfirm that all comments are confidential, UNLESS written approval is given for comments to be attributed to the interviewee.
- d) Ask whether the interviewee would be willing to take part in a follow-up interview, if needed.

Check that interviewee has your business card and contact details.

## **Appendix two: Informed consent information sheet and consent form**

**Date:** July 2011

### **Informed consent information sheet**

**Investigation title:** Space and the elaboration of occupational identity: an empirical study into schools.

**Researcher:** Elton Xhetani

**Institution:** University of Warwick (Warwick Business School)

**Supervisors:** Professor Davide Nicolini and Professor Justin Waring

#### **Invitation paragraph**

In this study I specifically explore how the physical changes on organisational space, if at all, forms and re-forms teachers' occupational identity. Exploring how organisational space constructs teacher's occupational identity provides us a chance into the extent to which public perceptions are synchronised by teacher's personal perceptions and the effect these could have in their present and future professional identity formations.

#### **What is the purpose of this research?**

This study aims to explore how the new change in organisational space affects teacher's identity in daily practices. In this research I am specifically interested in exploring how Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative shapes teacher's daily activities and their professional role.

The BSF programme embodies one of the largest single government investments in transformation schools in the UK for more than 50 years. This programme was initially discussed and brought into light by the Labour government in 1997 and it was launched in 2003. The programme was created with the aim to drive transformation in education, teaching and learning and in the attaining of school buildings. The aim of this major transformation was to deliver educational buildings that stimulate new approaches of learning and to deliver excellent facilities that benefit, teachers, students and the community alike. The aim of this programme was to rebuild or refurbish every secondary school in England by 2020, with the public investment put aside by the Labour government was over £55 billion (Education and Skills Committee 2007). The rationale behind the introduction of this initiative was

that it was alleged that older schools were incapable in their capacity to deal with foreseen changes such as shifting pedagogy, curriculum and learning expectations (Audit Commission 2003). Here I am interested in exploring how this rationale has been filtered down to teachers and how it affects their professional role and how they perceive this change.

In doing so in this study I undertake visual methods – meaning that at the start of the research I will provide participants with a disposable camera where they will be asked to take pictures of what they find meaningful for them. Pictures will be developed and at they will be used in a semi-structured interview which will take between 40 minutes to an hour. During the time at this institution I will be observing your lessons, social gathering and other daily activities. By doing this, I aim to provide some useful insights into how we make sense to a change and how we react upon it.

### **Why have I been invited to participate?**

Individuals in this study are completely voluntary selected. There is no pressure by myself in taking part in this research in anyway. The head teacher has circulated an email around to ask if you are interested in taking part in this research and that remains the case. This research is open to all teachers to take part.

### **Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Choosing either to take part or not to take part in the investigation will have no impact on your teaching, assessments and/or future studies.

### **What will the investigation involve?**

If you decide to participate in this study, I will provide you with a disposable camera where you have to take pictures of what you like/dislike about the new organisational space and how it helps/hinder your professional role. I will take your disposable camera after a month where I will develop them afterwards. During my research, I will attend your lessons, spend time in your department, meetings and I will be asking for 40 minutes to an hour semi-structured interview and this will be recorded. In the interview I will use the developed pictures for you to comment on them.

### **Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?**

I would like to inform you that all information collected throughout this research about individuals and institution will be kept strictly confidential and that anonymity

will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of the investigation material. The material will be only seen by myself, supervisors and the External Examiner.

### **What should I do if I want to take part?**

If you are willing to take part in this investigation then please sign the accompanying consent form.

### **What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The results of this study will be written up for my PhD thesis. They will only be read by supervisors and the External Examiner. It is likely that the results will be used to inform changes to academic and professional practices.

### **Contact for further information**

If you want a contact point for further information please contact either of supervisors: Professor Justin Waring ([Justin.Waring@wbs.ac.uk](mailto:Justin.Waring@wbs.ac.uk)) or Professor Davide Nicolini ([Davide.Nicolini@wbs.ac.uk](mailto:Davide.Nicolini@wbs.ac.uk)).

### **Thank you**

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet.

## CONSENT FORM

### Investigation Title

Space and the elaboration of occupational identity: an empirical study into schools.

### Name, position and contact address of the participant:

**Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above investigation and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above investigation.

☐☐☐

**Please tick box**

Yes No

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.
5. I agree to the pictures taken by myself can be used for the purpose of this study.
6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications.

☐☐☐☐☐☐

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Name of Participant

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Date

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Signature

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Name of Investigator

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Date

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Signature

### Appendix three: Print screen of data coding.

**Table 1: Narrative Theme of Visibility/ Control and Sub-themes**

Name	Sources	References
Visibility and Control	34	372
uneasy with surveillance	13	15
tribes	24	39
time control	16	21
time and role conflict	13	18
no place to hide (front stage vs back stage) - goffman	18	25
sense of control - in-group social identity	12	17
space and transparency	5	6
space as a form of control	20	41
space not optimised to create collaboration	12	29
space hinders flexibility in class	9	12
spatial isolation	20	38
territorial and belonging sense of ownership	24	52
justification of personalised space	10	12
impractical spatial arrangements	8	16
fluid space	10	13
feeling isolated from each other	10	10
double edge sword of space	8	8

**Table 2: Narrative Theme of Change and Sub-themes**

Name	Sources	References
Change	30	107
resistance to change	4	4
anticipating change	11	18
classroom design_modern teaching needs	23	50
comfortable space represented through visual method	1	1
time and change	18	34

**Table 3: Narrative Theme of Reflection and Sub-themes**

Name	Sources	References
Reflection	20	33
assumed perception of the college	24	36
self-reflection of identity link to space	30	70
space creating sense of personality	4	6
lost in space	11	16
spatial curiosity shown through visual methods	1	1
lack of respect	11	14
lack of study life balance	2	2
sub-optimal use of the surrounding natural environment	2	2
temporal aspect past to present	6	13
the odds - conflict of interest	10	16
They would be freelance.	1	1
confirmation of expectations	8	9
issue of personal importance	4	4
idealised vs practice concept theory of teaching	13	18
exclusion vs inclusion using space	12	15
engaging reflection	15	21
uneasy to critique policy but not comfortable	2	2
disconfirmation of expectations	5	6



**Table 4: Narrative Theme of Pedagogy/ Innovations at School and Sub-themes**

Name	Sources	References
Pedagogy and Innovations at School	34	496
work history	2	4
why be a teacher	1	1
peer-review teaching	2	2
pride	24	47
personality driven	19	33
realisation of the future of teaching	15	25
open space creating new oportunities for bad behaviour	2	2
natural vs artificial light	4	4
notion of familiarity facilitator_innovator	2	2
old building and bad behaviour	4	5
old building hindrance to motivation	4	5
one year or less at institution	2	2
segregation of academic learning	24	52
room rotation_anti-territorialism	6	6
space as a group making tool	16	22
compact centralised spatial design	5	7
space facilitates learning	11	14
unspoken norms	11	21
stakeholder relationship_trust	15	23
sub-optimal room allocations	3	3
teacher characteristics	18	30
ten years or more at institution	1	1
the malleability of the younger teacher	3	4
transferable skills	5	5
informal groups	2	4
facilities	28	78
facilitator_innovator	25	42
double edged sword of IT_facilitation versus isolation	3	5
distinctive skill set needed	26	47

**Table 5: Narrative Theme of Managerialism and Sub-themes**

Name	Sources	References
Managerialism	34	592
Managerial role	24	50
new role of teaching	24	48
building space and purpose	29	76
policy making	27	52
poor timetabling	6	8
practice vs theory	11	13
lack of shared vision_policy maker vs teacher	7	24
organisational structure	12	18
organisational culture	13	24
organisational communication	9	15
organisational burden	1	1
organisational adaptation	19	34
contractual obligations	3	3
current space prone to vigilance	9	10
cutting corners	15	26
demand exceeding supply - a strain on resources	17	25
recognition of hierarchy	8	18
technology acceptance model	26	47
training and development	7	9
design of space undervalues profession	9	15
lack of level playing field	5	5
lack of autonomy	10	17
improvement of aesthetics	9	13
hot seating	1	1
hidden agendas	2	2
external forces	13	24
diversity management	11	13

**Table 6: Narrative Theme of Collegiality and Sub-themes**

Name	Sources	References
Congentiality	33	141
compatibility_people oriented	30	87
corporate social responsibility_social care	19	36
boundary spanning	3	4
privileged personal space	2	2
space creating social interaction	8	8
transitional spaces and effective teaching	4	4